

BEYOND THE FAILING SCHOOL:  
RACE, SPACE, AND OPPORTUNITY IN CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY

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DISSERTATION

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## **Abstract**

The responsibility of public education is rarely attached to public officials, urban planners, or the business community. Instead much of the research today looks to parents, school administrators, or students in an attempt to understand the problems of America's public schools. The objective of this project is to explore the use of public schools in the re-creation of spaces of marginalization and isolation, by city officials and business leaders in their path toward ensuring that the city of Chicago becomes a global city. This project represents a counter narrative to the dominant stories on black communities and public schools that preach the cultural deficiency of disinterested students, uninvolved parents and community members, and inefficient teachers. Instead, by focusing on Renaissance 2010, the Chicago model of mayoral control and privatization for the nation, this project presents community voice(s) to offer an alternate story of disinvestment in Chicago's children of color.

This mixed methods project uses both quantitative and qualitative data to discuss the geography of opportunity for students of color in the Chicago public school system. Using critical race theory, this project seeks to analyze the effect of the creation of spaces of whiteness, and the commodification of schools in the city of Chicago. With a focus on the Richard M. Daley administration, from 1995 to 2010, this study details how his involvement in the city's public schools, as well as the involvement of the city's business community, has increased over time, finally culminating in the Renaissance 2010 initiative.

This project uses geographic information systems (GIS) software to produce images that spatially depict Renaissance 2010 school placements and public school closures, each resulting in the displacement of students of color around the city for the purpose of schooling. The contribution of this study is the visual depiction of a very standardized practice of disinvestment.

*To mothers, who are always fighting for what is best for their children*

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

*When there is a high degree of inequality in a city or nation, it can be difficult to maintain civic order and security, seek justice, provide needed welfare and so on... The degree to which access to education is left to the marketplace, for example, will have a profound effect on opportunities for intergenerational mobility throughout a nation (Abrahamson, 2004, p. 95).*

After finding that I held an utter contempt for the phrase ‘Black-White achievement gap’ and its failure to center structural barriers and disparate access to educational opportunities, I began to search for terminology that more adequately captured my own schooling experiences and what I knew to be true of Black students, parents, and community members historic commitment to the power of education. Much of the rhetoric surrounding Black student achievement and urban schools use a language of failure to cast blame solely on teachers, parents, and students for sub par standardized test results. Instead research that highlights disparities in access to material educational resources and opportunities, as problematic for Black student achievement, provides the theoretical foundation for this research project. This dissertation examines the larger themes of access to quality education, and school choice, for Black and Latino/a students in the city of Chicago. Within this broad description is a thirst to know more about the radical student sorting methods and school redistribution going on around the city. Which types of children receive top ranking schools within their neighborhoods, and which types of children do not? How exactly does the city decide where to put certain schools? Does the possibility of choice truly exist for Chicagoans of color?

This dissertation serves as one counter-narrative to theories of Black student self-sabotage, familial dysfunction, and other cultural deficiency rationales for Black student achievement. It is not the intention of this project to suggest that inequitable access to academic achievement for students of color will be entirely solved by improving factors beyond the walls

of the school buildings. Instead, this project will serve to broaden the discussion of the educational opportunities available to Black and Latino/a students by providing an analysis of the relationship between school choice, community involvement, and educational policy in the city of Chicago.

This dissertation stands on the shoulders of much of the research on Chicago that has traced racism in Chicago and its education system throughout its many transformations. Shipp and White (2009) argue that as school leaders, principals have always enacted accountability within their schools by shielding themselves from outside influences—and instead working from an internal and collective sense of morality and professionalism. They note that the new move towards high stakes policies has caused most to realign themselves with external influences. This coincides with Henig's (2009) argument that elected school boards have been overtaken by the 'new breed' of education executives (composed primarily of mayors, governors and presidents) who's main objective is perhaps not education, but general purpose politics and increasing the viability of corporations. This latest transformation has large implications for democratic participation nationwide, especially for low-income groups and people of color who have not sustained a large degree of political power.

The newest form of racism in Chicago cannot be confined to just one or two areas. In the case of public education, there is no one solution. There are societal ills like poverty that directly relate to the disparate funding formula of Illinois, and legislation that retreats from enforcing equity. And yet, primarily, the highly racialized political struggles within Chicago have largely contributed to current school reforms, which are fairly complicated expressions of ethnic competition, power, and control (Wrigley, 1997). Much of the research on race relations in Chicago have contributed a great deal to the theoretical foundations of this project, and primarily



this study relies on the groundwork of Homel (1984), Shipps (1997), Danns (2003 & 2008), Lipman (2004), Neckerman (2007) and Boyd (2008). This dissertation explores the use of public schools in the re-creation of spaces of marginalization and isolation, by city officials and business leaders on the path towards ensuring that Chicago becomes a global city. Using critical race theory (CRT), this study seeks to analyze community response to Renaissance 2010 (Ren10), and the commodification of schools in the city of Chicago. With a focus on the Renaissance 2010 school choice policy, from 2004 to 2010, this study investigates mayoral control and corporate involvement in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) system. Interest lies specifically with the culmination of their partnership with the Renaissance 2010 (Ren10) initiative.

The focus on Chicago's mayor is emphasized because of his crucial role in maintaining the current relationships of power operating within the public education system. After the Chicago School Reform Act of 1995, which brought an abrupt end to any semblance of power for Local School Councils (LSC's), the public school system was placed under mayoral control. It is important to note that corporate interest has attempted to influence public schools in Chicago publicly since 1877 (Shipps, 1997). Mayoral control is also not a new or unique occurrence in Chicago and, once the democratic machine mayors provided both the centralized power and the social stability for a more silent partnership, business interests were represented quietly through mayoral control from 1937 until the death of Richard J. Daley in 1976 (Shipps, 1997). Thus, although corporate influence has been represented in Chicago Pubic Schools almost since their inception, this dissertation begins with the 1995 reforms precisely because the result of these reforms (that eliminated independent boards in favor of mayor-appointed boards and focused on local centralization to improve student performance) highlights two important threads

within contemporary urban school reform initiatives: (a) it introduces the ideology that in order to improve student performance, those outside of parents, students, and educators are needed and (b) it signals the shift away from participatory democracy. The ideological, political and structural changes in Chicago's educational landscape are important not only because Chicago is a leader in school reforms to which the rest of the nation looks, but specifically, for this project, these shifts represent Mayor Richard M. Daley's disinvestment in Black and Latino/a children.

Shipp (1997) argues that due to corporate influence for the last few decades in Illinois, the difference between the legislation of 1988 and that of 1995 was not the display of parental power and democratic revitalization but the shift from centralized professional control to decentralized business management. Describing Chicago as a cautionary tale, Shipp (1997) notes that the arrival and reinforcement of the public policy advantages of business in school politics has been shaped by the structural and institutional factors of (a) extreme forms of racial segregation and (b) highly centralized government.

Voice, or narrative, is a critical element of the theoretical foundation of this project and, I assert that those without access to power and without adequate social capital to effect social and structural educational change are students and parents of color, and low income residents within the city. Mayoral appointed boards take power away from poor, working class residents as well as from residents of color. Although this demographic relies heavily on public schools for their educational needs, they hold the least amount of power to influence the policies that impact their children's educational opportunities (Chambers, 2006; Stone, 2004). In Illinois, the move away from participatory democracy in 1995 was the precursor to the neoliberal reforms taking place within the Chicago Public School system today. It is this tradition of denying residents of color

the access to create, change, or contribute in any meaningful way to the design of their system of public education that Renaissance 2010 exemplifies.

### **Primary Dissertation Questions**

*Our students deserve the least restrictive environment in which to learn.*  
--Teacher, Guggenheim Elem. Closure Hearing, 2/2/10

The larger objectives of this project are to explore the structural influences that shape the educational opportunities for low-income groups and communities of color. More importantly, I seek to document the dominant narrative of communities of color as they assert their rights to participate in the schooling of their children. To undertake this goal, the subsidiary research questions are designed to assess the demographic characteristics of primarily Black neighborhoods in the city, to provide the proper context for understanding community responses<sup>1</sup> to the geographic distribution of Chicago Public Schools (from 2004 to 2010). Thus, the primary question for this project is twofold. It first seeks to understand the school community's (parents, teachers, administrators, students) response to Renaissance 2010. It then seeks to understand the reasons for such a response. In the end, results from this research will help to challenge narratives which define disparities in achievement opportunities as academic achievement gaps, as well as those which assign blame to parents, students and communities using arguments based on cultural deficiency models.

It is important to note that the policy, Renaissance 2010, is not observed in isolation, but as a current example of policy decisions that inversely reward city inhabitants by race, class, and spatial location. Much of the research pertaining to Chicago details various cases of the city's historic disinvestment in its Black and Latino/a populations, and while acknowledging this

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<sup>1</sup> Within this paper, a school community is defined as the parents, teachers, administrators, and students of schools with predominantly Black populations.

history, this study seeks to extend the discussion further by focusing specifically on the quality of schooling opportunities for Black children in the city.

### **Race and Competition in Chicago Public Schools**

This project uses geographic information systems (GIS) software to produce maps of Renaissance 2010 new school placements, the termination of public neighborhood schools, and the relocation of students around the city for the purpose of schooling. It is necessary to place race at the center of this project, as this will aid in the analysis of the city's role in the recreation of public spaces and its current affect on Black student access to equitable schooling opportunities. Centering race also recognizes the need for intergroup social capital coalitions in order to accomplish any magnitude of school reform for both low-income children and students of color within the city of Chicago.

Acknowledging the role that race plays in the politics of urban education, in many ways, corrects for the diagnoses of urban schools that routinely overlook significant patterns of inequity within the schools serving students of color. By using critical race theory, this project acknowledges the challenges associated with urban school improvement and building cooperative arrangements between groups that control very different sectors of public education. Placing race at the center of the policy arena allows for the acknowledgment of intergroup competition, due to the historical legacy of mistrust within public policy built throughout years of racial divisions and Black subordination (Chambers, 2006; Orr, 1999). Because race is not simply included but placed in the forefront, the project is able to move beyond its acknowledgment and towards the development of the visual depiction of a very standardized practice of disinvestment. GIS maps, coupled with ethnographic methods combine in this project

to highlight community voice, and each contributes to a more accurate account of the educational opportunities for students of color in the city of Chicago.

It is essential that social capital, the mistrust of public policy, and intergroup competition be understood in the context of Renaissance 2010. Globalization and neoliberalism have affected the politics of schooling in Chicago by the introduction and prioritization of business interests above the pre-existing, and often competing, interests of residents. To attract professional and middle class families, highly publicized reforms like Renaissance 2010 act as a sort of advertisement of the city's separate educational programs. The combination of marketized individualism and control through a constant and public comparison, clearly privileges wealthy and middle-class parents, who have the ability to both decode and manipulate the deregulated systems of choice (Apple, 2001).

With the introduction of globalization and the prioritization of neoliberalism, the interest of business out ranks the competing interests of residents. Orchestrated by corporate leaders, the neoliberal urban agenda is to increase accumulation by restructuring the institutions and local government of urban cities. Thus, the city's budget and attention are repurposed. Budgets focus on investments in retail, corporate services, tourism, culture, pricey residential developments—and the educational spaces for those developments (Demissie, 2006, p. 20). Global cities require many trained bodies for their efficient operation; they need large numbers of both highly paid professionals and those that service them in low wage professions (Lipman, 2004). As the focus shifts to appealing to foreign investments, and ensuring that government regulations favor all that is entrepreneurial, there is no concern for those without the political clout to ensure that their interests are valued and represented in the market. The severe inequalities produced by an over reliance on the market and an underdeveloped social welfare system have significant

consequences for those without a role in the governance of urban schools and the creation of education policy.

The former role of a city, or municipal government—to pass laws, regulate behavior, and provide services to citizens—is transformed and replaced by the global cities new task to provide transnational corporations with the space and unified infrastructure to efficiently facilitate and control labor, communications, and capital worldwide (Hamel, 2001). Globalization has elevated the importance and power of a now hierarchal list of urban global cities, as they compete for both access to resources and the ability to remain attractive to those that control the flow of capital, goods, images, culture, labor and information (Demissie, 2006).

Globalization is one of the most recent methods of accumulation, and urban spaces like Chicago—new global cities—play a vital role in the dissemination of capital, goods, images, and people. The most noticeable role that globalization has taken in Chicago has been the deindustrialization<sup>2</sup> of its economy, which in turn decentralized the manufacturing industry, significantly impacting the economic and social lives of people of color and low income people that dwell within the city's limits. As a global city, Chicago is unique in both its hyper-segregated residential structure and concentrated poverty, thus experiencing quite severe forms of racial and social inequality after deindustrialization (Demissie, 2006).

Chicago, like many city governments, has incorporated neoliberal doctrines and urban policy strategies by recreating its urban spaces for both market-oriented economic growth and elite consumption practices. Global cities are where the tenuous relationships between wealth and poverty, and power and marginalization (which typify neoliberalism and globalization)

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<sup>2</sup> Deindustrialization is the process that occurs during the shift to service-based economies and the application of advanced informational technology. It has been used to privatize public services and increase the profits of industry through increases of: low wage and casual employment, rates of unemployment, racial and social polarization, and poverty in urban communities (Demissie, 2006).

unfold shaping both the tensions and the trends of educational policy (Demissie, 2006). Ideologically, neoliberal discourse erodes the very concept of education for democratic participation. It shapes educational policy, using the human capital development argument, to define education as merely the preparation for the employment sector (Lipman, 2004). And, although the tiering of educational experiences and opportunities is nothing new, with an increasing credentialism and the decreasing living wage, who has access to what knowledge is critical in the information economy (Lipman, 2006).

### **Project Design**

In developing a project featuring Renaissance 2010, mayoral control and neoliberalism in the development of American educational policy, this project is most inspired by the work of Lipman and Haines (2007). What separates this project from their contribution is the inclusion of critical race theory (CRT), spatial analysis and the argument of intent. Lipman and Haines (2007) ground their work in participatory research, and argue that Chicago's new plan for choice demonstrates a middle and upper-middle class conquest of the city's education system. Their critique reveals the necessity of cross community collaborations, and a growing broad-based opposition to Ren2010. In all fairness, their work questions the intent of corporate leaders (Chicago Commercial Club members) and local state officials when designing and implementing Ren2010. Still, although it includes an analysis of race, the article presents the policy as the product of neoliberal interests and ideologies that negatively impact communities of color. In centering race and racism, this project asserts that it is because of institutional racism that Ren10 was designed. I argue that the goal of the policy is to disrupt the educational opportunities of students of color, cast their communities in a language of failure, and claim their spaces.

Chapter 2 introduces a review of the literature surrounding neoliberalism, race and achievement. This section provides a brief history of corporate involvement in the governance of the Chicago Public Schools, following the role of the Chicago Commercial Club from 1906. It then highlights the transition from the Chicago Reform Act of 1988 to the Renaissance 2010 initiative, to make sense of the city's educational policies and the transition from centralization to decentralization and then toward recentralization. This chapter provides the groundwork for later conversations on Blacks and the Chicago Public Schools system, by briefly detailing the history of schooling and educational opportunities for Blacks in Chicago. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion on democratic participation in an era where educational policy is scripted around market principles.

Chapter 3 introduces CRT as a theoretical framework, and using GIS and participant observation as narrative. It reviews the research questions for the project, and details how maps will be used. This section offers a detailed explanation and description of the quantitative and qualitative data collected and analyzed for this study.

Chapter 4 contributes a descriptive analysis of the Chicago Public Schools located in primarily Black and Latino/a neighborhoods, using the maps produced by the research methods explained in chapter 3. This sections focus is the relationship between Renaissance 2010 (Ren10) schools, neighborhood schools and race in the city of Chicago. This section also provides a historical and political analysis of the complicated intersections between race, politics and class in the city of Chicago, to aide in understanding GIS results. Chapter 4 presents a counter narrative to the portrayal of Renaissance 2010 by supporters of the plan by employing simple spatial analysis procedures alongside CRT's narrative (as gathered through observation and secondary data analysis). The counter narrative will place the voice(s) and experiences of



Chicago community members in the forefront, with a particular focus on (a) community response to school closure notifications and (b) the practical consequences of excluding community knowledge.

Chapter 5 provides the concluding discussion of the research problem, offers future research implications, and ends with a critique of Renaissance.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Chicago Public Schools: Race, Space & Global Ambitions**

In 1988, the Chicago Reform Act legitimized parent and community power by legally turning over schools to parents and community groups but by 1995, the implementation of mayoral control laid the foundation for Renaissance 2010, which delegitimized parents and community members along with the public school system itself. This larger discussion of democratic participation and cultural capital occurs within the subsections of chapter two, which explores the main themes found within the literature on educational reforms in urban cities. Thus, chapter two provides the context necessary to understand the relationship between public education in Chicago and (a) race, residential segregation, and poverty and (b) mayoral control, corporate interests, and global ambitions. However, before discussing the latest Chicago education reforms in great detail, and therefore neoliberalism and globalization, it is necessary to first provide the context of their development.

#### **The Collapse of the Rust Belt and the Beginning of Neoliberalism**

The distinction between the Fordist era and present day is seen most clearly in the power dynamics between business (capital), labor and unions. During the Roosevelt administration, significant gains in the labor movement were made due to militant unionism, like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), who wanted to create one big union across industries. Credited to Henry Ford, Fordism refers to the concept of mass production in industry. Taylorism improved upon the Fordist assembly line technique with down to the second calculations designed to produce efficiency. President Roosevelt attempted to secure labor peace by implementing labor laws that, within the context of the preparation of the global dissemination of Fordism and Taylorism, respected and guaranteed workers rights to organize, bargain and unionize (Ranney,

2003). After consistent strikes and techniques of pointed aggression from labor, the relationship between capital and laborer resulted in a compromise between the two, and bargaining power for unions.

In Chicago, this relationship was exemplified in the steel industry where unions, wielded great power and control over their labor and were able to require autonomy, a good salary and suitable working conditions. Laborers were also able to help affect the employment security of their children by arranging training for technical jobs, so that they might save for college or have a direct point of entry into secure employment. For Black Chicagoans during the Great Migration, although their conditions were improvements from southern employment opportunities, they did not equal the progress made by European immigrants when they arrived in mass between 1895 and 1910. Black migrants were barred from competing as individuals and were instead shuffled into positions of service (unskilled and semi-skilled) (Hornel, 1984). Blacks entered the racially segregated labor market during the Roosevelt administrations New Deal programs, which enforced the segregation policies of the mid-thirties. The improving relationship between Black workers and labor unions significantly contributed to the Black occupational differentiation that represented upward mobility into the middle class (Hornel, 1984).

By 1950, it was estimated that over one-third of Chicago's Black workforce was employed in the manufacturing industry (Demissie, 2006). The collapse of the rust belt eliminated these high paying, blue-collar positions and replaced them with low wage service positions, many of which had been moved to suburban areas. Blocked by discrimination and transportation, many of these positions were inaccessible to the majority of Black job seekers (Demissie, 2006; Moberg, 2006). Chicago manufacturing spaces merged the distinction between

home and work as entire communities and neighborhoods soon revolved around the manufacturing industry. So, when the manufacturing industry failed, entire neighborhoods (gas stations, schools, churches, small businesses, and grocery stores) failed along with them (Ranney, 2003). Currently, these areas are either gentrifying or continuing to deteriorate (Ranney, 2003, p.90). As neighborhoods formerly known as the Black Metropolis became ghost towns, the traditional focal points for organization—both home and work—disappeared and individuals were geographically dispersed. The collapse of the manufacturing industry thus quickly decreased both the economic and political power of not only these workers for generations, but for those that relied on their income, like neighborhood business' and dependents (Ranney, 2003).

In the hypermobility of both industry and capital, dual cities are created within the same space as some are pushed to the margins of the economy while others fight for the command positions at its center (Lipman, 2004). So, globalization and neoliberalism affected Chicago politics in two ways. First, Chicago's economic evolution began post-WWII, due to the growing concerns of business leaders over the economic decline of Chicago's central business districts. These districts suffered from both dropping property values and retail sales, in addition to the loss of manufacturing jobs to suburban areas. Thus, the entire 21-year tenure of mayor Richard J. Daley, from 1955-1976, was marked by both overlapping developments and a collaboration between the mayor, the city's business leadership, and the agencies of municipal planning as they attempted to transform the city to maintain its reputation as a major economic hub (Demissie, 2006). Secondly, the economic and urban revitalization benefits for both the city and its local business leaders had a significant effect on Chicago's working class. The corporate rationale which increased profit through capital mobility devalued the labor power of workers,

not only in Chicago, but domestically, because company's who moved to new locations accrued more labor time for smaller wages from new employees. The direct and indirect job loss resulting from the shifting economy disproportionately affected women and people of color who, because of the high supply of workers, had a hard time replacing their living wage incomes. Their median incomes were cut in half, their health care access was non-existent, and with their positions no longer available, their previous skills were devalued in the changing market (Ranney, 2003). Thus, although this shift produced more profit for corporations (Koval, 2006)<sup>3</sup>, for workers in Chicago this meant that due to the limited availability of jobs, they were forced to replace their salaried expectations<sup>4</sup> with temporary jobs that paid significantly less. These workers were also criminalized by welfare reforms, as they navigated through the lack of services in place to help alleviate the pressures from their sudden and in some cases, perpetual unemployment (Hamel, 1984).

This is where an understanding of globalization and neoliberalism becomes important. From the perspective and ideology of the changing economy of the workers, money price is the only value, and so, what is efficient (read: cheaper) for business is good for the market. The effect on individuals is only significant as it affects one's ability to consume. Actually, the rationale for the movement of industry by some public policy analysts, economists, and politicians, and its effect on workers is as follows: the distorted wages of blue collar workers kept them from improving their quality of life through higher education, and so, this shift will

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<sup>3</sup> In the manufacturing sector of the nation's new economy, productivity increases mean that companies can produce about eleven times more product using 65% fewer employees than it did 65 years ago.

<sup>4</sup> When I say this, I mean that the living expenses of these workers and the quality of life expectations held inherently and by family members remained the same. Of course, although some discretionary materials could be lived without, their basic human needs of food, shelter, health care, etc remained.

encourage them to realize that they need to improve their skills, education, etc., so that they will be able to better compete individually in the market for their needs (Ranney, 2003).

### **Globalization: Neoliberalism**

Globalization and neoliberalism are mutually dependent. Globalization is a method for the accumulation of surplus, and neoliberalism is a means to that end. David Harvey (2003) defines neoliberalism as, “a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices” (p. 2). Although the definition of globalization has been contested, its simplest definition is the movement of ‘stuff’ around the world. When we read the work of a foreign scholar in a domestic journal, put on our clothing in the morning, snag a good deal on the internet but complain of its shipping costs, gain a new faculty member from Australia, or purchase anything without a ‘Made in the USA’ label<sup>5</sup>, we meet globalization. People and things have traveled throughout the world for centuries, so the idea of globalization is not new or revolutionary. For example during Roosevelt’s administration, globalization is seen in the implementation of the Bretton Woods agreement. This agreement was designed to rebuild Europe as it suited the US: the international standardization of the US dollar through institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Each organization held a specific role in the facilitation of European

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<sup>5</sup> Although, the ‘Made in America’ label can now apply to things that have ‘negligible’ foreign content, and products made of ‘all or virtually all’ US materials and on US soil (which includes products made on the soil of developing countries, like Jamaica, in free trade zones). This is an example of neoliberalism. Retrieved on June 13, 2008 from: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/madeusa.shtm>

growth, and each allowed the U.S. to maintain a significant level of political control over international policy. The IMF's role was to stabilize the value of currency for purposes of international trade, by providing short-term loans and assistance should inflation arise. The World Bank was established to mediate financial matters between lenders in the U.S., Europe, and Great Britain in the development of long-term projects. The role of the GATT was to facilitate trade amongst nations and to prevent expensive trade wars (Ranney, 2003, p. 36). Thus, it is the contemporary application of globalization and its effect on the methods of accumulating surplus in a capitalist society that have changed. Its contemporary application in urban spaces is usually associated with the rise of neoliberal approaches to public policy.

Since the early 1970s, neoliberalism has revealed itself in political and economic practices and modes of thought, as evidenced by deregulation, privatization and the withdrawal of the state from many areas of social provisions (Ranney, 2003). This ideology directly followed the post-Fordist era, where both globalization and technology allowed for the global division of labor. The newfound ease in the movement of capital dismantled the Fordist era's reliance on economies of scale and agglomeration. Ranney (2003) argues that the decline of the post-Fordist era led to an economic and political crisis in every capitalist nation, which then allowed for a new mode of surplus accumulation. Although providing space for leading academics and politicians to discuss alternative strategies and economic programs in forums held by the Trilateral Commission and the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD), the neoliberal movement was jumpstarted by the following: the Chilean experiment, credit, massive deindustrialization, an attack on organized labor in the developed world and, a staunch regime of austerity in the developing world (Ranney, 2003, p. 38).

It was in Chile on September 11, 1973 that neoliberalism as a state function was first attempted, after Augusto Pinochet's coup against the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende threatened the domestic business interests of elites with its push towards socialism (Ranney, 2003, p. 7). Even though it occurred through undemocratic means, this swift military coup was supported domestically by traditional upper classes and internationally by U.S. corporations, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger (Harvey, 2005). Pinochet quickly repressed the social movements and political organizations of the left, like community health centers that served the poor, as he freed the market from regulatory restraints (Harvey, 2005). Chicago School trained economists of Chile were hired to negotiate with the International Monetary Fund, and subsequently, they restructured Chile's economy along their guidelines. Their actions revived the Chilean economy briefly as it failed shortly thereafter during the Latin American debt crisis of 1982.

The survival of neoliberalism depended on democratic means; therefore popular consent had to be rallied. This was done by disguising a call for the restoration of class power with the common sense language of freedom—specifically, the advance of individual freedoms through the market (Harvey, 2005, p. 7). To be more specific, the beginning stages of the New York City fiscal crisis, between 1974-1976, is credited as one of the defining moments which strengthened U.S. expressions of neoliberalism. During the Nixon/Ford era, the fiscal crisis of the city of New York became a national issue. As a result of the erosion of the economic base of the city by capitalist restructuring, deindustrialization and suburbanization, the city veered dangerously close to both bankruptcy and the closing of its municipal bonds markets (Lichten, 1979; Harvey, 2005).



Still, it is important to note that other modes of thought were prevalent at the time. Most sociologists attributed the fiscal crisis to the welfare state, loose fiscal management, the lack of managerial control, or unions. For example, the empirical study of the Temporary Commission on City Finances (TCCF) blamed the city's fiscal crisis on powerful unions who forced fiscally unsound wage and benefits settlements in return for labor peace (Lichten, 1979). Economists, however, attributed the crisis to the city's practice of borrowing money (from its creditors to pay its creditors) to conceal the gap between its operating expenses and its sales and real estate revenues (Lichten, 1979). Either way, partially due to the financial crisis in their own industry and within the overall capitalist economy, the financial industry—as the “powerful banks”—refused to shoulder the burden of the city's debt before several conditions were met. Of those conditions the most substantial was the demand that they secure the power to: (a) transform the structure of city government; and (b) increase interest rates. The solutions from the main financial institutions pushed the city further into its financial crisis (Lichten, 1979; Harvey, 2005).

The entire episode is regarded as a coup by the financial institutions to restore class power. It is also important to note here that the intensifying mobilization and organization of the working poor should be viewed as an example of the class struggle for the social wage—or more so, the attempt to abolish the connection between wages and the production of exchange-value. It is within the context of politicized class struggle that workers mobilized to apply pressure to the state sector to increase the value of their labor, thus redirecting some revenue from the needs of capital to the needs of workers and the poor. Therefore, capital's response was an attempt to reestablish the relationship between production, wages, and profitability, and to regain primary control of the appropriation of surplus. From capitals perspective, if class struggle caused the

fiscal crisis, then the creation of an atmosphere of scarcity, austerity, and discipline was the solution (Lichten, 1979; Harvey, 2005). It is necessary to note that the effect of this austerity was not distributed equally between classes. Corporate welfare displaced the welfare of the people. The business class was able to increase interest rates through the Municipal Assistance Corporation, redirect state and federal tax benefits for its base, and secure its investments in the city. All of this was done in exchange for the benefits and security formally held by unions and city workers, and the needs of the poor.

Although the banking industry was very much involved in the events leading to the fiscal crisis, specifically by withholding funds and underwriting and divesting city securities, after President Ford's refusal to 'bail out' the city, the financial community gained formal power over the state board. With the formation of the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) on May 26, 1975, the financial community controlled the city's finances and budgetary expenses to secure city investments (Lichten, 1979; Harvey, 2005, p. 89). The organizing power of the financial and corporate communities through MAC presents an extremely clear picture of the success of capital in asserting its ideology. Big banks rallied to erode the infrastructure of the city, close many of its medical facilities, decrease and freeze wages, layoff city workers, and end the free tuition and open enrollment practices of the City University of New York (CUNY). Government became entrepreneurial as a more austere, non-elected control board, the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB), was created with the similar role of MAC, although EFCB was a legal mandate. Because it was not required to work with labor unions, residents or workers, EFCB was able to control union contracts, reduce city services, and facilitate the investment of union worker's pensions into the city's notes and bonds—the latter unions agreed lest the city default on its loans and enter bankruptcy. The investment of the municipal union's pension funds

signaled a huge shift in their ability to negotiate with, and affect in any real way, capitals austere policies. Their pensions (and thus their futures) were tied to the fiscal stability of the city, although without the voice/vote traditionally wielded by investors.

Neoliberal actions during the fiscal crisis of New York City made way for its introduction both domestically and internationally under Reagan and through the International Monetary Fund during the 1980s. The further solidification of the power of capital continued with the Supreme Court decision of 1976, which allowed corporations to legally contribute unlimited amounts of money to political parties and political action committees (PACs) (Harvey, 2005). PACs ensured the financial dependency of both parties. Although most known for their relationship with the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, dependent upon large contributions, also became directly vulnerable to the interests of big business (Harvey, 2005).

In an effort to gather a committed electoral base, the Christian right was rallied through the rhetoric of religion, cultural nationalism, homophobia, racism and anti-feminism (Moreton, 2007). For this population, liberals and excessive state power became popular adversaries (Harvey, 2005). Thus, by diverting attention from corporate power and its connection to economic issues, capital convinced the Christian right to vote against its material and economic class interests (Harvey, 2005; Moreton, 2007). As city government became increasingly entrepreneurial rather than socially democratic, ‘government’ transformed into ‘urban governance through public-private partnerships’ (Harvey, 2005, p. 47). Because the business class built alliances based on class rather than individual interests, they were able to use their wealth and resources to build a solid electoral base, and to use the Republican Party as a political class instrument.

After perpetuating neoliberalism as the last hope for freedom and consolidating state power Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister of the U.K., and President Ronald Reagan used their powers of persuasion, co-optation, threat, and bribery to maintain the climate necessary for the prosperity of neoliberalism. It was Reagan's election in 1980 and both his support of monetarism and opposition to inflation that ushered in the reduction of government in the regulation of industry, healthcare, the environment. With the establishment of the National Labor Relations Board, his leadership also made way for the transformation of the relationship between buyer and seller (Harvey, 2005, p. 52).

### **Neoliberalism and the Destruction of Claims on Value**

Traditionally, in order to begin new modes of surplus accumulation, the old ways must be destroyed. The economic depression and two world wars posed a threat to both capitalism and the destruction of value (Ranney, 2003, p. 43). The Reagan administration continued the destruction—shifting the focus from production to finance—by increasing the affordability of the costs of production (by the movement of capital to cheaper locales), and by constructing capital-labor union relations in such a way as to prevent unions from affecting any real change in their working conditions. For example, when air traffic controllers went on strike to protest dangerous conditions and long hours, President Reagan, refusing to bargain, fired all strikers permanently and replaced them with military controllers until replacements could be trained. His actions signaled to corporations that firing strikers was politically acceptable and they immediately began to do so (Harvey, 2005, p. 43).

Arguably the lowering of the social wage both internationally and domestically is the global effect of deindustrialization and the assault on labor unions in the U.S. (Harvey, 2005, p. 44). During Reagan's administration both austerity, through the deindustrialization of the rust

belt, and the persuasive rhetoric of the neoliberal goal of freedom for both capital and labor silenced any remaining union power. Although he slashed social spending, budget deficits greatly increased under Reagan because of his increase in military spending and tax cuts for the wealthy, and these debts continued into the next decade. The pursuit of full employment initiatives and the economy stimulating deficits of Fordism differed from that of Reagan's neoliberal era because the deficits of the latter were increased within the context of evaporating social programs (Ranney, 2003, p. 41).

### **Education in Chicago: Global Ambitions and Corporate Interests**

*...cities of Blackness crammed inside larger cities of Whiteness...*  
--Wayne Miller quoting Gordon Parks (p ix)

Nicknamed the “White City<sup>6</sup>” during its hosting of the 1893 World's Columbian Fair, Chicago became an idealized “vision of urban life at its noblest and most civilized” (Cronon, 2000, p. 342). Even at this time, the city's elite politicians and planners believed in Chicago's manifest destiny as the exemplification of the perfect metropolitan vision. At the heart of this reality were extreme polarities—wealth and poverty, slum and skyscraper—which were accomplished by the creation of a fantasy urban life obscured from the productive labor of Chicago's working class.

The involvement of civic organizations like the Commercial Club of Chicago (CCC)<sup>7</sup>, whose membership consisted primarily of business leaders in the city, in the planning and

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<sup>6</sup> Presumably, this name is due to the use of electricity and the large amount of lights that lit the city.

<sup>7</sup> One of the oldest elite business clubs in the city, members of the Commercial Club of Chicago would later negotiate both the 1988 and 1995 Chicago school reforms. Its members include the heads of the main philanthropic and civic institutions of the city, over 275 leaders in the cities top financial and commercial institutions, as well as the mayor and state governor. The club, operating under the principle of consensus decision-making, is the venue by which its members pool their resources to influence legislation and school policy.

policies of the city dates as far back as 1909 (Smith, 2006). In fact, after commissioning Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett to prepare the “Plan of Chicago”, the Commercial Club played an aggressive role in creating the vision of Burnham’s quickly renowned plan. Burnham’s proposal was an ambitious plan for transforming Chicago into the preeminent city of America (Smith, 2006). As early as 1904, Burnham advised members of the Commercial Club that if they sought to improve Chicago, they needed to pool their resources, establish an independent organization, and force the city’s public officials to do what they would not do without external pressure. Burnham’s advice—to target businessmen and investors and make the city more efficient and attractive to these groups—or risk the loss of their dollars; sentiments echoed in the policies of the city today. Burnham predicted that if Chicago “put on a charming dress” and became more visually appealing, wealthy residents would spend their fortune in their hometown instead of traveling or ‘running away’ elsewhere (Smith, 2006). Although frequently Burnham attempted to convince the poor as well as the rich of the worthiness of his ideas, he maintained that it was most important to cater ones ideas for wealthy Chicagoans, as their wealth and purchasing power would trickle down to the poor (Smith, 2006).

The power of civic organizations both of the past and present should not be underestimated. Even publicly elected officials were outranked when standing alongside powerful and wealthy members of civic organizations (Smith 2006). Commercial Club members consisted of a highly selective and elected group of those in the highest positions among the city’s business leaders. Burnham was himself an elected member of the Commercial Club by 1901, and he shared the political views of members from these organizations who failed to distinguish between their personal interests and those of the city of Chicago. Club members resources included statesmen, politicians, academics, scientists, presidents, clergymen and the

like—high achievers with great reputations. Virtually all members were White, male, protestant and republican. These were men familiar with one another beyond their membership in the Commercial Club. They shared corporate board memberships, golf club memberships and other social, cultural and business relationships. This was a tightly knit group of the extremely influential, a collection of individuals motivated to protect and advance their interests.

The governance of the public school system and the growth of the city have been intimately connected since 1906 to the interests of the business community. In October of that year, the executive committee of the Merchants Club called for a closed meeting where the main agenda items were: (a) the Chicago Plan; and (b) the reform of the public schools administration. In fact, the collective identified public school reform as one of their most important works, and their involvement with public education went hand in hand with the development of urban spaces. For example, in an attempt to sell the Plan to Chicagoans, the Commercial Club targeted parents via their children's enrollment in public schools, and the Plan was integrated into the student's curriculum and became a mandatory textbook (Smith, 2006).

It was with the creation of the Burnham Plan that business first aligned for the purpose of making systematic comprehensive changes to the physical development of a major city without the explicit involvement of government officials (Smith, 2006). Therefore, it was the vision and governing ideas of these twelve of so self appointed business leaders that recreated urban spaces for all Chicagoans (Smith, 2006). The early planners denied any appearance of self-interest, instead, arguing that creating order and making a profit were congruent and not competing aims. They deemed downtown Chicago the heart of the city, and placed a call that Chicago's responsible elite take the lead on controlling the urban masses (Smith, 2006).

Thus, Chicago city planners have actively sought to make Chicago a global city since the early 1900s. Although the term itself is new, Progressive planners recognized Chicago's central location for Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, North Missouri and parts of Indiana and Michigan. They attempted to emulate the city designs of Paris, the architecture of Rome and the beauty and elegance of Athens (Smith, 2006). Placing its future amongst the established flourishing city's of the time, early planners set out to first beautify the city (via the City Beautiful Movement), noting that bad urban environments devalued civilization and would produce both similar ideas and responses from the people. Additionally, their approach to improving urban life by creating grand parks, buildings and gathering areas complete with fountains and statues reaffirmed their belief that such structures were a better plan for the poor than providing public services which directly addressed social ills and inequities. By imposing their vision and values on the undesired communities of immigrants and workers, supporters of the program hoped to assert social control (Smith, 2006). Still, ever present in their marketing campaigns, was an undercurrent of rhetoric that encouraged the masses to accept and support the status quo, and a social and economic hierarchy that placed elite businessmen at the apex.

In 1896, British journalist George Warrington Stevens wrote that he could not reconcile the juxtaposition of parks and slums or the clean air and foul stench, which simultaneously existed within the city of Chicago (Smith, 2006). Since at least the 1870s, Chicago was a place with sharply drawn class lines (Smith, 2006). One example lies in the George Pullman community created in the 1880s for the working class employees of the Pullman factory. The community was developed adjacent to the main factory, and included separate housing, retail outlets, a library, and even a separate church. In 2009, Chicago continues to be a city of mutually existing extremes. At once there exists extreme poverty and extreme wealth, extreme grandeur



and extreme squalor, majority Black neighborhoods, majority Latino/a neighborhoods, majority White neighborhoods. The separation or isolation of the working class from Chicago's well to do has been the solution historically of city planners for addressing the "problem" of urban communities. The focus on race, space and opportunity in this research project is grounded in the recognition that institutional and sociopolitical racism are inseparable from urban development in Chicago (Street, 2007).

### **Race & Global Cities**

Nationwide there has been an ideological shift. The acceptance of racism as a barrier to Black advancement has been replaced by support for a new and colorblind ruler: the market. Street (2007) introduces a new discourse, neoliberal racism, where status and wealth are solely dependent upon an individual's success or failure in adapting to the free market. Giroux's (2003) notion of neoliberal racism contends that human agency and misery are defined by personal choice. As such, social inequity is the result of an individual's poor choices or their lack of moral responsibility, each a private issue. If this philosophy is accepted, it is not the role of government to address the social disparities of race and class, but the individuals.

The time of social welfare programs and policies designed exclusively for the benefit of those most in need, or the Fordist collaboration between business and laborers in their mutual pursuit of accumulation, is no more. This new era, the shift from a manufacturing economy to a service and information based economy—sometimes referred to as austerity, the new world order (NWO), or neoliberalism—holds a different belief in the utility of government. The function of government then, is to encourage individuals and businesses to become globally competitive, and to minimize any reliance on the government for the social welfare of its citizens. In this light it is neither economical nor is it rational to provide social provisions for

those that are unable to get their needs fulfilled by competing in the market (Ranney, 2003). The mantra of neoliberalism and globalization changed the ideology around notions of freedom. They celebrate and exploit individualism and consumption at the expense of social group efforts, while overlooking the collectives within the private sector. The policies of neoliberal governments function primarily to create corporate empires and build corporate wealth. In neoliberal regimes, social and democratic functions of the government are rescinded, as the left hand of the state is starved to feed the right (Street, 2007).

Although recognizing that the broader effects of such policies affect not only the raced but the classed as well, Street (2007) is clear in his assertion that within the heavily racialized U.S., Blacks are disproportionately represented at the lower spectrum of the nations spatial hierarchies. And so, in this new, post-race era, the public is presented with images of successful African Americans who ‘transcend race’ like the newly elected President Barack Obama (Ladson-Billings, 2008). Coupled with the language of diversity, the very presence of these hard working individuals is thrust forward as proof of the end of racism in America and more importantly, as proof that it is above all, self-determination that reaps the best rewards.

Yet, Blacks in urban cities like Chicago continue to experience distinctively extreme forms of hyper segregation—a spatial apartheid—that one would not expect of a group that has lived in these cities in large numbers for decades. The European American ethnic groups that filled Chicago’s slums in the past are now filled with White yuppies that identify with no particular ethnic group, while Black slums continue to be replete with Black ethnic groups (Street, 2007). Deeming African Americans the truly ghettoized group in the city, Street (2007) points to the research of the Harvard Civil Rights Project as proof that Blacks in and around Chicago continue to live in concentrated isolation from other racial and ethnic groups, including

Latinos/as and Asian Americans. As of the latest census tract data in 2000, although Blacks are 19% of the population in Chicago, the average Black Chicagoan resides in a census tract that is 73% African American. Such figures support national reports that Chicago ranks as the fifth most segregated metropolitan area for Blacks in America and highlights the extreme isolation of Blacks in the city (Street, 2007).

### **What's the Fuss: Race and Education in Chicago**

In the history of Black education in Chicago, Black resistance to racially segregated educational options has been a reoccurring theme and, as early as 1863 just as racist ideas and legislation mandating segregated schooling emerged, so did Black resistance. Many families simply refused to send their children to the colored School and they continued attending their regular classrooms (Homel, 1984). After the ratification of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the federal Constitution, and in the same month of Lincoln's assassination, the Colored School closed, ending the de jure racial barriers to the Chicago Public Schools (Homel, 1984). Still, the great migration provoked fear and hostility in younger Whites, who held no connection to the anti-slavery movement. Racially segregated schools and unequal educational resources became the reality. Blacks again rallied through parent groups and organizations like the Chicago Urban League (CUL), the Chicago and Northern District Association of Colored Women (ACW), and the Chicago Council of the National Negro Congress (CCNNC), to protest and remedy the two most important education concerns for Black students during the 1930s and 1940s: overcrowding and school board representation (Homel, 1984).

In addition to the weight of overcrowding and administrative representation, by the 1960s and 1980s, racial and economic isolation, an increasing drop out rate, and school violence were

added to the list of major issues for Black public school students (Lipman, 2006)<sup>8</sup>. An example of both the school reform efforts of Black Chicagoans and the beginning influence of neoliberalism in Chicago schools occurs in the case of the pseudo resignation of superintendent Benjamin Willis. After the warnings of business leaders to the mayor that the integration of schools would result in White flight, the interests of Black CPS students and the interests of the city of Chicago's business aristocracy were immediately and diametrically opposed (Danns, 2003).

As a staunch supporter of segregation during the Richard J. Daley administration, superintendent Willis yielded his power to block desegregation attempts during his tenure (Danns, 2003). During the 1960s Freedom Day's Boycotts, sponsored by the Coordinating Council of Community Organizers (CCCCO), Blacks protested the increasingly unsatisfactory conditions of defacto segregation in the Chicago Public Schools, in addition to the role of both superintendent Willis, and the Board of Education in creating and preserving the segregated school system. It is not at all surprising that integration was one focus of the boycotts, as Willis' solution to the overcrowding of the public schools Black students attended was a) the assignment of double shifts, where students attended school for half the day, and b) trailers—nicknamed Willis wagons. Willis' solutions were presented during the same time that the construction of schools in White neighborhoods continued (Danns, 2003). Despite protests and multiple arrests, the city's segregation focus continued to negatively affect the quality of educational experiences and resources for Black CPS students (Danns, 2003).

So, it was on July 4, 1969 that the CCCO submitted a complaint to the Education Commissioner under Title VI, Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act, charging the Chicago Board

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<sup>8</sup> Although the focus of this project is the educational opportunities for Black students, these were also the issues of Latino students attending Chicago Public Schools.

of Education, its president, and superintendent Willis with promoting a racially segregated and discriminatory school system. In the detailed report, the CCCO listed everything from instances of gerrymandering to the board's legislative attempts to block integration efforts. Citing the Board's preference for double shifts or building new, segregated schools for Blacks to address overcrowding—although White schools were geographically closer and underutilized—the complaint requested that federal funds be withheld (Danns, 2003). Education commissioner, Francis Keppel, determined on September 30, 1965 that although some of the statements required further investigation, federal funding was to be withheld until Chicago schools were up to code (Danns, 2003).

Nevertheless, the school reform attempts of Black organizers were again thwarted when Mayor Daley met with President Johnson three days later to get the federal funds released and—after the face saving concessions of the Whiston-Cohen Agreement, they were (Danns, 2003, p. 54). The U.S. Office of Education's choice to release federal funds, with evidence of purposeful segregation, severely weakened its ability to enforce Title VI defacto segregation (Danns, 2008).

The only repercussion to the city's meticulous segregation policies was its receipt of a report from the Office of Education in January 1967, which listed a request that the city address Title VI concerns in faculty and student assignment, and open enrollment practices in trade and vocational programs. The new superintendent James Redmond's suggestion was a one way busing program, moving a few Black students to White schools. This, he rationalized, would incite the least amount of White flight (Danns, 2008). The majority of White and Black communities objected to busing, albeit for differing reasons.

Some members of Black communities rejected the notion of one-way busing and its underlying assumptions about the quality of Black neighborhood schools in relation to the

education programs offered in White schools. Some members of both communities believed that funds directed toward neighborhood school improvement would be the best solution. Other Whites rejected the plan that would bring ‘ghetto’, ‘impoverished’ Black students, who lacked character and initiative, into their good neighborhood schools (Danns, 2008, p. 67). Nevertheless, the Chicago School Board approved the busing plan on March 6, 1968. Less than 1% of Chicago’s 580,000 students participated in the voluntary plan (Danns, 2008, p. 72).

According to Danns (2003), an ideological shift had occurred by 1968, after Dr. King’s failed Civil Rights effort to desegregate Chicago neighborhoods. Black school reform efforts progressed, governed by attitudes that were less concerned with non-violence and integration, and more focused on gaining control of local schools and procuring an equitable education for their children (Danns, 2008).

Black students were not passive agents during the fight for school reform, which was evident by the Lawndale community student protests in the fall of 1968 (Danns, 2008, p. 75). On October 14<sup>th</sup>, between 27,000 and 35,000 students gathered to protest their school conditions. They listed twelve demands, which included a request for more homework, new and relevant course materials, health insurance for athletes, and an increase in Black faculty and administrators. Although not all Blacks supported the tactics of the students<sup>9</sup>, the student reformers received a large degree of support and assistance from both teachers and community members (Danns, 2003). Community members supported the students by picketing in front of the Board of Education and boycotting public schools. After receiving a meeting with the Board, students and teachers were granted the promotion of seven Black teachers to assistant principal (Danns, 2003, p. 85).

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<sup>9</sup> This cannot be expected, as there is no monolithic ‘Black community’.

## Chicago Public Schools: A Model for the Nation

*...the problem is that public education is a monopoly..  
--2003 report of the Commercial Club of Chicago (Lipman and Haines, 2007)*

Although the “fear of urban Black upheavals spreading throughout the country during the 1960s caused school administrators to bend slightly to appease the demands for change”, the educational reform campaigns of Blacks and Latinos/as from the 1960s to the 1980s was an invaluable component of the grassroots movement to elect Harold Washington as mayor in 1983 (Danns, 2003; Lipman, 2006, p. 250). Because the former mayor, Richard J. Daley, used huge amounts of credit during the Fordist era<sup>10</sup>, the relationship between Chicago’s mayor’s, and the business leaders of Chicago was complex. The city’s finances were directly tied to the happiness of private investors, and their faith in the thriving economy and potential of the city of Chicago (Ranney, 2003). Due to both the decline in federal resources under President Nixon, and deindustrialization, mayors in large cities had to ‘court the markets’ by continuously focusing on the stability and improvement of their business climate (Ranney, 2003, p. 104).

Thus, even with the election of a mayor more favorable to African American communities, the conflict between the welfare of the people and the welfare of the business community continued to exist. The birth of neoliberalism increased the importance of the business community and redefined the use of municipal debt finance, as it was no longer to be used strictly for public services, but for private sector activities. Consequently, although Harold Washington’s platform was people oriented reform, the impact of neoliberalism and globalization on cities, communities, and workers placed severe limitations on Washington’s platform of unity and fair share local governance (Ranney, 2003). Still, Washington’s

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<sup>10</sup> Mayor Richard J. Daley sold municipal bonds to private investors in the business community. These wealthy individuals and members of the business community purchased the city’s municipal bonds because they favored their tax-exempt status.

innovations in his four and one half year's in office set most of the trends in politics used by Richard M. Daley's administration today (Bennet, 2006). He is most known for applying affirmative action to municipal contracts, but he also pursued a daring policy program which placed a high emphasis on neighborhood infrastructure investment through industrial developments, like planned manufacturing districts and industrial corridors, which remain significant policy commitments (Bennet, 2006).

Washington seemingly balanced the interests of both the business community and his Black constituents<sup>11</sup> (Homel, 2001). For example, although he agreed to build the new White Sox Comiskey Park, displacing the largely Black and stable population in Armour Square, it was during his tenure that the thirty-year redevelopment of the Loop halted (Danns, 2003; Moberg, 2006). He protected key manufacturing areas from real estate development to protect jobs. Washington's focus on neighborhood initiatives additionally extended into public education, and in the fall of 1986 he convened an education summit with the support of forty representatives of business, local universities and junior colleges to develop a plan to both improve the quality of high school graduates and guarantee them jobs upon their graduation. The following year, he reconvened the summit, appointed a parents community council, and placed parents alongside business leaders with the task of restructuring the public school system (Shipps, 1997; Lipman,

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<sup>11</sup> Perhaps he learned from the early experiences of Atlanta's 1973 mayor, Maynard Jackson. Jackson began his administration with a vow to directly affect Black Atlanta by building a mass public transportation system, requiring that firms that expected to do business with the city hire minority workers, and provide more city contracts to minority owned firms (increasing the percentage of city dollars paid to minority firms in his first term from 2 to 33). His confrontations with members of the private sector and public denouncement of (and refusal to consult) corporate leaders failed to slow the trend of decentralization and suburbanization, and made little progress for his factory worker constituents who's private employment options continued to diminish. Consequently, he found that although his tactics benefited Black business people and middle class professionals, he was unable to satisfy the needs of both low-income Blacks and big business. After a racially polarized second term success, he changed his strategy to one better suiting corporate leaders.



2006). Although the ‘Learn-Earn Connection’ never emerged, it did lead to the 1988 School Reform Act (Shipps, 1997).

Most would agree that the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act (P.A. 85-1418) was an example of radical decentralization in school governance, taking community control further than any school restructuring efforts in U.S. history (Epps, 1994; Shipps, 1997). For the first time in the history of Chicago schools, schools became legally accountable to economically disadvantaged children of color, their parents and their communities and therefore parents and communities were *legally* empowered (Epps, 1994). Control of school governance was turned over to parents and community members through Local School Council’s (LSC), formed by six parents, two community members, two teachers, a principal and a student member. The Chicago School Reform Act was made all the more impressive as it allowed voters to elect a LSC for each of the city’s almost six hundred schools. Additionally, principals were stripped of their tenure, and councils controlled their hire and termination (Katz, Fine, & Simon, 1997). The reconstruction of the parent-principal relationship did more than redefine the relationship of power. It allowed parents to directly communicate their expectations to prospective principals, and allowed candidates to respond. Councils were also responsible for approving school improvement plans and allocating discretionary funds as well as a large amount of state funds (Katz, Fine & Simone, 1997; Lipman, 2006). And so, although simply one year before, the secretary of education, William Bennett, declared Chicago schools to be the worst in the nation, by 1988, with the passing of the Chicago School Reform Act, the Illinois State Legislature established one of the most far reaching displays of democratic participation by ensuring neighborhood control.

In 1995, the Illinois General Assembly reversed Chicago's radical school reform, and seized control of the public schools from parents and community members. The governance of the Chicago Public School system was placed into the hands of the mayor, Richard M. Daley. He, in turn, promptly passed the reigns over to the business sector, replacing distinctions like 'general superintendent' with 'chief executive officer'. What occurred within the seven years from 1988 to 1995 to cause such policy retractions has been described by some as simply a shift in governing strategy resulting from LSCs that operated with little financial and organizational training, subsequently producing parents and community members who failed to successfully restructure neighborhood schools (Shipps, 1997). Others charge that although the school reforms were radical, decentralization was surface in nature, allotting limited decision making abilities to parents and community members through LSC's (Epps, 1994). The most important decisions, those involving employee union negotiations, system wide budgets and the awarding of major contracts continued to be made by the general superintendent of schools, the Chicago Board of Education, and the central office staff.

And still although in theory the reform focused on community control, corporate business associations were silent but key organizers in the 1988 reforms, and their critiques of the 1988 law informed their participation in the 1995 law, which resulted in mayoral control (Shipps, 1997). It was after facing resistance from the central office during their attempts to offer advice, that business associations invited civic and community groups to help in their efforts to restructure the school governance system (Shipps, 1997). Many African American education activists believed that political and business leaders within the White community did not care about the education of ethnic 'others' within the city enough to provide adequate educational funding for the Chicago Public Schools. They remained skeptical about the school reformers

hidden agenda (Epps, 1994). The results of the 1987 coalition between corporate business associations and civic and community groups resulted in the writing, lobbying and implementation of the Chicago School Reform Act (Shipps, 1997). With this in mind, the leap from a law which focused on community control to one that ignored community voice does not reflect the erratic nature of the Illinois legislature, but the long standing representation of corporate interest (Shipps, 1997).

After varying educational policy reforms in many different directions, three years later, in 1998, upon visiting Chicago, then President William Clinton declared that the Chicago Public Schools system was a model for the nation (Katz, Fine, & Simon, 1997). Clinton's praise of the system was not for its democratic involvement of local communities, but for its focus on accountability and the re-centralized control of schooling. His own administrations Goals 2000 plan, and its partner the National Skills Standards Board, was also heavily shaped and supported by corporate allies. These relationships demonstrate how corporate entrepreneurship has come to blur the boundaries between public and private school management (Shipps, 1997).

Similar to an occurrence leading to the business influence in New York City, the relationship between the private sector and the Chicago Public Schools system was cemented as a result of the 1979 CPS financial crisis. Business leaders approached the governor with their concern about the negotiability of their debt notes and, to solve the crisis, a resolution was planned. However, what began as a corporate bailout became a corporate takeover by 1995 (Shipps, 1997). The resolution forced all of the members of the board of education to resign, granted an emergency loan to the school system and established the Chicago School Finance Authority (SFA). The SFA has been described as the fiscal watchdog of the system, maintaining and exercising its authority. The support of the SFA, the Chicago Commercial Club, the mayor,

and community school reformers, made the Chicago School Reform Act possible (Shipps, 1997). Unfortunately, with one preoccupied with budget efficiency and the other nervous about the preparedness of the future work force, both the SFA and the corporate sector showed little patience for the trial and error methods of the LSC's (Katz, Fine & Simone, 1997). LSC's did not form their own organization until 1994, and as such, they lacked a unified voice. A definite disconnect existed between what was discussed 'downtown' and its reflection on the everyday realities and meanings for those that attended and worked within Chicago Public Schools (Katz, Fine & Simon, 1997). Eventually by 1994, it was agreed by all involved that the central office and local schools should be realigned towards a complimentary and mutually beneficial working relationship. But the consensus was short lived because there were not enough signs of obvious and measurable progress to quell corporate concerns (Shipps, 1997). In the end, tensions between the city and state government, an underlying fiscal crisis, national disinvestment in public education, and the politics of a big city broke the foundation of the Chicago School Reform Act (Katz, Fine & Simon, 1997).

The new chief executive officer of the Chicago Public Schools, Paul Vallas, placed over one hundred LSC's on probation and truncated their authority. Accountability became a hot term, and the SFA was eliminated in order to broaden the scope of the mayor's six appointed trustee's. The public school deficit quickly vanished and capital to build new schools materialized. Vallas aggressively approached the problem of low performing schools by creating a 'watch list' for those with low test scores and a system of probation—complete with probation managers, who held great authority (Katz, Fine & Simon, 1997).

The 1995 recentralization of schools resonated with a lot of families. The Chicago Public Schools system has historically failed to adequately educate large segments of its population, and

finally someone was being held responsible for student's academic progress. This topic is complicated when using neoliberal rhetoric that equates buzz words like 'accountability' and 'testing' with justice and equality (Lipman, 2006). Academic progress is measured by standardized test scores, and all students and schools are evaluated as if from one homogenous group. Former President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is built around simplistic binaries that sort students and schools into failing or successful, good or bad, and punishes or rewards them accordingly (Lipman, 2006). Moreover, the response of different school districts and student cohorts is linked to both the political power of school administrations, and both the past and present racial and class advantages of their respective communities. Additionally, CPS's various special programs, schools, and instructional techniques have been instituted in ways that reinforce the already racially and economically segmented realities of CPS students (Lipman, 2003). In most Chicago Public Schools, White students are overrepresented in advanced placement and college preparatory classes, and students of color are underrepresented. So, while selective enrollment schools and magnet schools are relatively immune from accountability, the penalty of grade retention, test drills, and basic skills assignments fall heavily on students of color in 'failing' schools (Lipman, 2006).

During the 1990s the foundation was laid for Chicago's Renaissance 2010 public education policy and on June 24, 2004, at an event hosted by the Commercial Club of Chicago, Mayor Daley revealed it to the world. The plan for gentrification and the displacement of many people of color announced the closing of sixty to seventy Chicago Public Schools and the opening of one hundred "new" schools, two-thirds of which were to be privately run and staffed by non-unionized employees (Lipman & Haines, 2007). Before education can be placed in the marketplace, choice must be created, and Renaissance 2010 provides charter schools, public

schools, and contract schools to be consumed (Lipman & Haines, 2007). One third of the schools, CPS performance schools, were to be governed under Renaissance 2010 policies and funds, and each were given five-year contracts, which came with the benefit of the loosened restrictions for unions and LSC's (Lipman & Haines, 2007). The governance of the remaining two-thirds of schools, contract schools and charter schools, was contracted to outside non-for-profit vendors through CPS. The contract and charter schools could be then re-contracted out to for-profit education management organizations (EMOs). Each school is required to compete for start up funds, in the private sector, to supplement the public dollars received in their initial budget. Renaissance 2010 connects both the accountability policies of the past, and the privatization of the future. It has implications that extend to unions, real estate, community governance and employment wages and benefits (Lipman & Haines, 2007). Renaissance 2010 additionally legitimizes the role of corporations in the private sector to make crucial decisions for public education, without the input of the community or any degree of public accountability.

### **Race, Space and Educational Opportunities in Chicago**

The debates surrounding the achievement gap usually focus on either the cause or the cure to this particular social ailment. More specifically, and on both fronts, much of the discussion centering on the achievement gap either involves an analysis of the family, the student, or the school (Ogbu, 2003; McWhorter, 2001; Lareau, 2002). Possible causes of Black-White achievement disparities are usually either attributed to the disproportionate allocation of funds (economic), the lack of cultural capital of low-income families and students of color<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> When I use the term students of color, I am primarily referring to Black and Latino students. Also, when speaking of students of color within the confines of this paper, I recognize the close link between race and class in issues of educational equity and academic achievement, and therefore, I am writing of specifically low-income students of color, and the academic disparities that these students face within the American public educational system. I recognize the

(sociological), institutional racism or barriers (structural), and finally, the self-defeating beliefs of the students themselves (psychological). Much of this research agrees that the differences between Black and White students and those between affluent and low-income students begin very early in a child's life, and these divisions are reinforced just about every day.

In her examination of family attributes, Lareau (2002) writes that race plays less of a role in the parenting practices between middle class and low-income families than she originally expected. In fact, the methods employed by both Black and White parents of the same class were more likely to be identical than not. Still it is important to note that Black parents viewed race as significant in the lives of their children. They stressed the importance of their children learning what it meant to be Black in today's society, and they monitored their children outside of home for 'signs of racial problems' (Lareau, 2002, p. 760). Yet Lareau (2002) argues that social class is what matters most in childrearing. It is the cumulative effect of parental life experiences, occupation, education, socioeconomic background and access to resources. Enrolling children in extracurricular programs, sports, summer camps, and other activities requires access to private transportation and a flexible work schedule, not to mention the added cost of purchasing uniforms, paying instructors and coaches, or the occasional hotel and food costs for overnight stays. Lareau (2002) found that middle-class White children made academic gains during the summer, while low income Black kids lose ground during this time. Interestingly, she finds that for kindergartners, in spite of gains during the school year, the existing gap combined with summer loss accounts for almost the entire Black-White achievement gap.

Lareau's (2002) finding that middle class parents made a deliberate and sustained effort to stimulate children's development and cultivate cognitive and social skills is extremely

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implication of unifying the terms, 'students of color' and 'low income', and I am by no means implying that all students of color are low-income.

important. These parents were found to consistently transmit identifiable advantages to their children. For this Lareau (2002) has coined the term ‘cultural logic’. Due to their awareness of the declining middle class, parents were even more committed to the development of a broad array of social skills and talents within their children. As the competition for credentials increases, mandatory standardization stratifies the population along cultural lines—and just as access to economic capital before it, this hierarchy allows the professional and managerial middle class to pass on its cultural capital to benefit their children (Apple, 2001; Lareau, 2002).

The informal knowledge and skill required to decode what is expected in schools, matched with the cultural capital possessed by more affluent parents, is an example of the conversion of economic capital into cultural capital (Apple, 2001). According to Lareau (2002), while middle class children spent their time involved in activities controlled by adults, working class and poor children spent the majority of their time in unstructured leisure activities. The activities of children from working-class or poor families were primarily centered around the home. Summer was seen as a time for relaxation. Credence should be given to the skills of these parents, who were more likely to deal with anxieties associated with unreliable transportation, providing food, access to healthcare, physical safety and the like. Given their own reality, they preferred their children’s lives to be relaxed and happy with the burdens of life averted until later on in adulthood. This childrearing practice, she termed ‘natural growth’. Lareau (2002) considered it more child-centered because children’s leisure activities were not continually monitored or interrupted by parents and their days ebbed and flowed according to the child’s interests and familial obligations.

Chin and Phillips’ (2004) findings directly contradict those of Lareau (2002). They conclude that most parents from all social classes equally desire to actively cultivate their



children's talents and skills. Middle class parents ability to construct highly stimulating summers for their children is instead attributed to greater financial ability, flexible work schedules, and knowledge of how to match their child's interests with activities. Additionally, Chin and Phillips (2004) assert that by a certain age, the agency of the child must be factored into this equation as their role in their development is instrumental and varies according to the personality and motivation of the child. The authors posit several explanations as to why each study (Lareau (2002); Chin and Phillips (2004)) produced findings that contradict the other. First, Chin and Phillips (2004) sample was composed of primarily immigrant families. It is important to recognize that some recent immigrant groups have traditionally performed well academically, even when attending the most deprived American schools. Therefore, we must take care not to arbitrarily apply an 'ethnic-cultural-capital' model of success, and as Bankston (2004) writes, we must recognize that these are not "inherent ethnic properties brought from homelands, but the result of responses to the challenges and deprivations of the host country" (p. 176).

Also, Lareau's (2002) study focused on the school year while Chin and Phillips (2004) examined the summer, and it is reasonable to hypothesize that childrearing practices may change seasonally. For example, working class and poor families may expect the school to engage their children during the school year and therefore practice concerted cultivation during the summers. Alternately, middle class families may practice concerted cultivation during the school year, viewing summers as a time for skill building. Furthermore the population samples of each project varied by region, ethnicity, and citizenship. Chin and Phillips (2004) took samples from Black, Latino/a, Asian, and White, first and second-generation immigrant families from a large western city; Alternately, Lareau (2002) sampled Black and White families from both a mid-western university town and a northeastern metropolitan city.

Ultimately, Chin and Phillips (2004) argue, each study used a different sampling strategy and this contributed to the contradictory results—Lareau underestimates social class differences in childrearing philosophies while Chin and Phillips overestimate. Either way, these scholars each place the blame of continuing academic disparities on differential familial practices and social class, maintaining that race is not as strong a factor. Still, other theorist would contend just that, maintaining that race and culture are strong factors in achievement, while class is less important.

Still, it is clear that racial differences persist after adjustments for social background. And, since Black wealth has grown at the same time that it has fallen even further behind the wealth of Whites, explanations aside from class are indeed due (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997). Enter Steele's (1995) theory, stereotype threat—a social-psychological predicament that can arise from well-known negative stereotypes about a group. The notion of stereotype threat highlights the source of classic deficits in standardized test performance, and emphasizes that the process of testing is not group neutral. Instead of viewing achievement disparities as the result of a group deficit or inability to properly assimilate, his analysis presents the “social psychological predicament of race, rife in the standardized testing situation, that is amenable to change” (Steele, 1995, p. 810). After all, Hernstein and Murray's (1994) assertions that racial disparities are the result of functionalism, Ogbu's (2003) notion that Black students have internalized a ‘sambo mentality’ and believe their intelligence is inferior to that of Whites, or McWhorter's (2001) rant on lazy and self-sabotaging Black students does not exist in a vacuum (Hernstein and Murray, 1994; McWhorter, 2001; Ogbu, 2003, p. 77). For instance, results like those from Downey and Pribesh (2004), which examined White teacher bias when evaluating Black

students, reaffirm that race in the classroom matters. Students are unable to leave their race at the door as some might have you to believe.

And so, despite the existence of countering research—that which shows that Black and Latino/a students, especially those in segregated minority schools and with minority teachers, tend to have loads of optimism about their future education and desired professions (Goldsmith, 2004), that which finds that Black students remain as fully identified with schooling as White students (Morgan and Mehta, 2004), or that which despoils the myths that single-parent homes negatively affect Black student achievement (Battle, 1998<sup>13</sup>)—many strategies to improve the achievement results of Black students begins with the assumption that there is a deficiency within Black students. These ‘at-risk’ students are then enveloped in a language of failure (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

It is almost as if, with *Brown*, the sociological connections between race and access to opportunities have simply vanished, in favor of the much preferred practice of focusing on the individual and the school. Just as African American history is typically portrayed as beginning with slavery—or the Emancipation Proclamation, African American educational history is presently most often as beginning after *Brown*. This historical readjustment makes it much easier to contend that Blacks simply no longer care about education, are disinterested in schools, or even worse, are inherently lacking culturally and socially to make substantial gains academically. The works of DuBois (1903; 1935), Anderson (1988)<sup>14</sup>, Bennet (1993) and Siddle-Walker

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<sup>13</sup> This research analyzes the impact of SES on the educational achievement of Black students in single versus dual-parent families. At the lower level of SES, Black students in single parent families score significantly higher on standardized tests than their peers in dual-parent homes. The reverse is true for students at higher levels of SES, where dual-parent students outperform their counterparts in single parent families.

<sup>14</sup> Anderson begins with a historical lesson detailing the perseverance of ex-slaves in the development of a system of universal education which, they hoped, would supplement their

(1996)<sup>15</sup> are forgotten, and suddenly the state becomes the hero that has in the past provided social reforms, complete with the required funding, and that now offers revolutionary education reform, all of which to no avail. It becomes easy to accept that the government has simply done all that it could do, and perhaps the time has come to privatize the public education system if only for the sake of efficiency.

Our sights should be directed towards understanding Black academic progress over time, through historical and contemporary analysis, because as Anderson (2007) astutely reveals, the current racial hysteria and competition surrounding the ‘test-score gap’ is neither the first nor the last gap on the way to full equality (Anderson, 2007). There was first the debate on the ‘literacy gap’, and after that there was the ‘elementary school attendance gap’, which was followed by the ‘high school completion gap’, and later the ‘college graduation gap’, ‘the graduate and professional degree gap’, and of course the ‘income gap’ (Anderson, 2007). Although the standardized performance gaps between Black and White students is substantial, it is no more so than the ‘gaps’ proceeding the one we now face, and since the framing of the entire discussion has been distorted to discount the failures of White students to meet federal and state standards as well, the complexity of achievement is not addressed (Anderson, 2007). Anderson (2007) reveals that Black and Latino/a students are not alone in national trends, White students have not

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transition into emancipation. He then connects education to the systematic oppression of the formerly enslaved asserting that their education was an explicit threat to the rule of the planter class. Initially, mass education of former slaves occurred through methods of “self-teaching” and “native schools”, which were schools established and sustained by ex-slaves, in the absence of other methods education.

<sup>15</sup> Siddle-Walker takes an historical look into Black-White educational segregation of the Caswell County Training School rejecting the notions of inferiority attributed to the educational environment of said schools. This research focuses on the effective or positive benefits associated with the segregation of Black students within the south, with emphasis placed on the environment in which the students were trained. Her work stands in stark contrast to the popular images of Black segregated schools that were inadequate, lacked material resources, and were therefore inferior.

made substantial progress on standardized tests since 1970, while with respect to White students, students of color have made the most significant gains on standardized tests over the past thirty years. And, given that White students are disproportionately educated in the most favorable conditions, while students of color usually end up receiving the worst of what is available from high poverty schools, the failure of White students to improve test scores over the last three decades should present a clearer portrait of the complexity of the path towards educational equality (Anderson, 2007, p. 17).

The achievement debate is complicated, and many argue that neither racial nor class based arguments provide adequate explanations alone. Particularly because the racial emphasis creates a problem of concrete evidence in this contemporary and politically correct society (covert discrimination is difficult to prove, as is stereotype threat in action); while a class based emphasis urging the lower classes to unite fails to address the issues of specific racial groups and leaves the historical legacy of race unblemished. Subsequently, using arguments that focus on race or class alone can be counterproductive (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Although neither method is free of weakness, both racial and class arguments are necessary if we truly want to understand existing inequality (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p.35).

Oliver and Shapiro (1997) suggest adding the indicator ‘sociology of wealth’ to the analysis of racial disparities. This indicator is described as a grounded approach to understanding the racial differences that occur during wealth accumulation. Oliver and Shapiro (1997) maintain that the analysis of wealth—not income, education, or occupation—is important because it combines both arguments of race and class while revealing the effects of historical factors. The authors define wealth as a particularly important indicator of individual and family access to life chances, and the command of financial resources a family has accumulated over time as well as

those inherited throughout generations. Wealth possesses the unique ability to create opportunities and secure a certain standard of living for not only the original earners but their heirs (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997, p. 2). The discussion of wealth, which differs from what is typically used by economists, is instrumental in understanding the current data on racial 'gaps'.

The approach Oliver and Shapiro (1997) apply to understanding the racial differences of accumulation exposes the unique historical and contemporary impact of both class and race in America. Thus, continuing disparities in wealth must challenge our perceptions of race and issues of social justice, if only because current wealth discrepancies among Blacks and Whites with similar credentials and achievements are vast and persistent (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997).

Adding wealth to other indicators also provides a more accurate and powerful explanation of social inequality, which can be used to understand public policy issues related to racial inequities. For example, Blacks and Whites have historically faced divergent opportunities to gather and generate wealth. From Reconstruction (when the Southern Homestead Act of 1866 failed to extend the 1862 Homestead Act to freedman, making Blacks a landowning class) to the suburbanization of America (which was encouraged and principally financed by the federal government), the actions of the federal government through taxation, transportation, and housing policies of the 1930s to the 1960s has excluded all but few Blacks (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997). As late as 1991, the Federal Reserve study of lending patterns shows disproportionate mortgage denial rates for Blacks that had little, if any, relation to neighborhood or income (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997). No matter where Blacks chose to live or how much they earned, banks were reluctant to lend. In these ways, the state has fostered homeownership and asset accumulation for members of some groups at the expense of others, and in the process this practice has led to public and private policies that promote residential segregation.

Residential segregation can hardly be explained by the market or individual preference. Segregation patterns were structurally perpetuated by the Home Owners Loan Corporation program, created during the Roosevelt era. This program introduced standardized appraisals of the fitness of particular properties and communities for individual and group loans, which first institutionalized then rationalized racially discriminatory practices in lending (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997). These practices limited Black access to both the suburbs and government mortgage funds. Later, these regulations and policies were adopted by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) which then suggested to its appraisers in its manual that to retain neighborhood stability, properties should utilize restrictive covenants and subdivision regulations to ensure that they continue to be occupied by the same social and racial classes (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997). The remnants of these practices continue to exist in mortgage lending, as banks reject qualified Blacks for mortgage loans much more often than similarly qualified Whites.

Residential segregation for low-income residents amounts to more than shared spaces with those sharing similar features (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997; Ladd, 1998). Spatial isolation, the unique segregation of Black Americans and the consequences suffered as a result of racial segregation, is the principal structural feature of American society responsible for both the perpetuation of urban poverty and the major cause of racial inequality (Massey and Denton, 1993). Consequently, although the residential segregation of Blacks is viewed charitably as a natural outcome of impersonal social and economic forces in American society, neither the racial isolation of people of color, nor the creation of the ghetto is normal. In this research project ghetto is defined as a set of neighborhoods that are exclusively inhabited by members of one group, within which virtually all members of that group live. By this definition, no ethnic or racial group in the history of the United States has ever experienced ghettoization even briefly,

except for African Americans (Massey and Denton, 1993, p. 19). The ghetto has not occurred by chance. It is the result of well-defined institutional practices, private behaviors, public policies, and the deliberate decisions of White Americans to deny Blacks access to certain housing markets (Massey and Denton, 1993, p. 11). There is an economically motivated rationale for the racial isolation of Blacks, and Massey and Denton (1993) remind us that White apprehensions about racial mixing stem from their belief in the immediate threat of undermined property values and reduced neighborhood safety, when Blacks are introduced to traditionally White spaces (p. 94).

The residential segregation of our nation affects economic disparities and both contribute to the racial segregation within the Chicago Public Schools system. The Illinois funding formula allocates funding to schools based on local property taxes (the wealth of the neighborhood). This intensifies existing disparities in the educational opportunities and resources available to low-income students. There is a strong connection between social and spatial mobility, and given that segregation perpetuates poverty, the barriers to spatial mobility are in effect barriers to social mobility. Hence, the confinement of people of color to segregated neighborhoods is a very powerful impediment to their socioeconomic progress (Denton and Massey, 1993). The cause of poverty and its relationship to inferior schooling is structural and institutional racism (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The systemic discriminatory practices in home ownership policies are particularly vile because home ownership is *the* single most important means of accumulating assets (Oliver and Shapiro, 1997, p. 8). Equally troublesome in terms of both income and wealth accumulation, as late as 1999 Black workers suffered the most severe extent of intentional job discrimination nationally—constituting 57% of the minority victims of discrimination while making up only



49% of the minority labor force (Blumrosen and Blumrosen, 2002, p. 116). In fact, for each minority person affected by discrimination in the Blumrosen and Blumrosen (2002) study, a White person gained an employment opportunity. Disavowals citing isolated events, individual accomplishments, or some lack of marketable skills will not suffice here (Loury, 1998; Blumrosen and Blumrosen, 2002). It is not accidental that Whites are the beneficiaries of intentional discrimination against people of color in the labor force (Loury, 1998, p. 216), and it is not such a stretch to imagine exactly who benefits from the practice of housing discrimination. And so, with the knowledge that Chicago's public school districts are funded based on local property taxes, the ability to understand exactly why educational inequities continue to persist becomes much less muddled, especially given that research attests to the dilapidation of the physical school buildings, and the overall disenfranchisement of indigent children and families who lack both wealth and resources, and are therefore less likely to wield the political clout necessary to improve their lot (Kozol, 1991). The power of racism is material, economic and cultural, and it permeates all facets of the political economy and thereby continues to be central to the politics of education (Lipman, 2004). We have not an achievement gap but an education debt, and this is where the focus should lie (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Instrumental in the commitment to an equitable education for all students, regardless of race or class, is structural change via legal and social reforms. If we seek to end the negative effects of race and poverty for students in the classroom, we must also look outside of the classroom, and into society to attempt to end racism and poverty there. Several decades of education reform have failed to bring about any substantial improvement to the schools populated by racially and economically isolated students of color. With each new decade spouts some educational initiative or another, from Ford's "Equal Educational Opportunities Act" to

Reagan's "A Nation at Risk", Clinton's "Goals 2000", the Bush administration's "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB), and the latest President Obama's "Race to the Top" (RTTT). There is never a lack of political rhetoric promising to improve America's schools.

Successful schools are not a well kept secret. Schools that actively practice the inclusion of the local community in deciding school matters and the inclusion of the school in community factors (Smrekar, 2003)<sup>16</sup>, high expectation of success and respect for all students, internal accountability, small classes, strong and purposeful leadership and commitment, extensive parental involvement (Frazier-Trotman, 2001; Yan, 1999; Smrekar, 2003), and quality staff and professional development (McGee, 2003)—above all, it's the shared vision that stakeholders buy into and work together to achieve (Towns, Cole, and Serpell, 2001).

Ultimately, educational reforms must be understood within the context of a fluid state that holds both competing and contradictory goals; and education policy simply as the product of specific social and economic agendas that are usually presented as the result of logical economic imperatives (Lipman, 2004). Neoliberalism has become hegemonic as a mode of discourse and its ways of thought have been incorporated into the 'common-sense' ways in which we interpret and make sense of the world. It is founded on political ideals of individual freedom and human dignity, central values of American civilization (Harvey, 2005, p. 3). The adamant demand for testing, reductive models of accountability, standardization, and the strict control over both pedagogy and the curricula is seen as the only option left for urban schools in the restructuring of global markets (Lipman, 2004). Both the answer and focus then shift toward improving accountability by improving standardized tests. The next 'rational' step would then be to spend

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<sup>16</sup> Early literacy programs, other early childhood programs for students, and assuring that students meet their health, safety, and nutrition needs fall into this camp.

more on complex tests worth teaching towards (Harvey, 2005). This kind of rationale leads to education reforms like vouchers, school choice, national standards, and national tests.

Harvey (2005) succinctly sums up neoliberalism as “a theory of political economic practices that suggests that human well-being can be advanced by freeing individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (p. 2). In this theory, the role of the state is simply to create and preserve an appropriate framework that guarantees the quality of money, structures that protect property rights, and ensures a properly functioning market—by force if necessary. When analyzed within the context of a capitalist economy with a strong push towards adapting a market based school system, accountability standards may just be another gimmick used to sell us on the need to rid ourselves of public schools entirely in favor of privatization (Apple, 2001). Dominant interests usually convince the vast majority of Americans to accept unequal power relations and massive social inequalities that are constructed as common sense (Apple, 2001; Lipman, 2004). Without the proper focus, when public schools inevitably fall short of accountability standards, their credibility will diminish and with this, public support for their continued improvement is undermined. This is a contradictory process, by which the state shifts the blame for the very inequalities in access and outcomes it has historically promised to reduce from itself and onto our schools, individual teachers, parents, and children while simultaneously maintaining control in key areas (Apple, 2001).

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Design**

#### **Data**

As stated earlier, the larger objectives of this project is to explore the structural influences that shape the educational opportunities for low-income groups and communities of color. I document the dominant narratives of communities of color as they assert their rights to participate in the schooling of their children. To undertake this goal, the research questions are designed to first assess the demographic characteristics of primarily Black neighborhoods in the city and then to investigate changes in the geographic distribution of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) with predominantly Black students from 2004 to 2010. The research questions for this project are again as follows:

1. What is the school community response to the Renaissance 2010 policy?
2. What are the main explanations for community reactions to the Renaissance 2010 education policy?

The subsidiary question for the second research question is as follows:

1. Is there additional evidence to support community response to Renaissance 2010?

Collectively, these research questions provide the foundation for an analysis of school choice, participatory democracy and educational opportunities for students of color attending Chicago Public Schools.

This project relies primarily on secondary data analysis and observation at the Chicago Public Schools board of education meetings, and community organizational meetings. The human subjects research element of this project occurs in these observations, and the ‘participants’ for this portion of the research are those in attendance at the various meetings of interest. Both participants and their meeting discussions are being observed, however, there are

no planned interventions/interactions with human subjects. In addition to published research on Renaissance 2010 and communities of interest, the investigator will use newspaper articles, CPS parent (<http://pureparents.org>) and CPS teacher websites (<http://coreteachers.com> and [www.teachersforsocialjustice.org](http://www.teachersforsocialjustice.org)), and observations at public meetings to capture the concerns of the community and the actions taken by residents of Chicago in response to the Renaissance 2010 initiative. Such sources (newspaper articles, official documents, and internet resources expressing community reactions to Renaissance 2010 or urban school reform particularly in the city of Chicago) will help to ensure that I have an accurate understanding of the changes occurring throughout the city's educational landscape.

### **Introduction to Community Organizations**

The below introductions to community organizations are brief adaptations taken directly from their organization websites.

**Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE).** The Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE) is composed of teachers, retirees, Paraprofessional School Related Personnel (PSRPs), parents, and community members. CORE seeks equitable public education in the city and fights to ensure a worker and student centered Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). Members of CORE organize to attend the Board of Education's citywide hearings for charter schools and the monthly public participation Board meetings. CORE members charge that the agenda of Renaissance 2010 is to attack neighborhood schools. As an organization, CORE has also filed discrimination charges for the turnaround policy of the Chicago Board of Education, alleging that that policy disproportionately affects Black teachers.

**Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE).** The organization, Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE), originated in 1987 during an infamous 19 day school strike.

During the strike, members of what would soon be known as PURE parents, held classes for Chicago Public School students outside of City Hall, marched at City Hall, and began to organize to give parents a voice in school issues. Currently PURE's Board of Directors, membership includes around 800 economically and ethnically diverse Chicagoans. PURE continues its early goal of enhancing the quality of public education by supporting, informing, and advocating for parents by ensuring that their voices are heard by the school administration and the Board of Education. PURE provides workshops for parents, and has created a help hotline to directly provide information to parents and Local School Council (LSC) members. Additionally, PURE publishes four newsletters that serve parents, LSC members and other school leaders by keeping them abreast of current and past educational issues throughout the city.

**Teachers for Social Justice (TSJ).** Teachers for Social Justice (TSJ) is an organization composed of teachers, administrators, pre-service teachers, and other educators working in public, independent, alternative, and charter schools and universities in the Chicago area. Members are committed to education for social justice. Members continue to create and recreate anti-racist, multicultural and multilingual classrooms and schools that are grounded in student experiences. Activists believe that all children should have access to an academically rigorous education. Members of TSJ reject Chicago's model of school reform because it is heavily geared towards accountability standards and high-stakes tests. This organization was created to counteract current CPS policies, which it views as stifling public discussion and debate. Members are committed to working with parents, students, other educators and community members to collectively contribute to school policy discussions and create more equitable schools for all Chicago students.

## Description of Research Variables and Terms

The variable socioeconomic status or *hhmed*, is composed of data from the 2000 U.S. Census reports on neighborhood demographics (median household income).

The variables *Black*, *White* and *Latino/a* are taken from the definitions used by the 2000 Census to describe African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic residents.

The variable '*Ren10*' describes Renaissance 2010 schools. Renaissance 2010 school point data and achievement data will be used beginning with the creation of the first cohort of Renaissance 2010 schools in 2005 and will continue until March 2010, which marks the end of the data collection phase of this dissertation. As of November 28, 2009, 92 of the proposed 100 Renaissance 2010 schools have been opened in the city of Chicago.

The variable *school type* distinguishes Renaissance 2010 schools from preexisting neighborhood schools (traditional), selective enrollment schools, and magnet schools. School type for Renaissance 2010 schools is divided into three categories: contract schools, performance schools, and charter schools, which are explained in detail below. Additional information about Ren10 schools can be found in Appendix A.

According to the CPS website, the goal of selective enrollment high schools is to provide academically advanced students with a challenging and enriched college preparatory experience. Selective enrollment schools offer a rigorous curriculum consisting of primarily honors and advanced placement (AP) courses. Teachers at selective enrollment schools expect students to be internally motivated and engaged with their studies. These schools focus on developing the critical and analytical skills of students by promoting diverse academic inquiry. Selective enrollment schools are competitive and require different modes of entry.

Chicago's magnet schools usually exist without neighborhood attendance boundaries. These specialized schools have a curriculum focus on one subject area, for example math, science, or language. Magnet schools may not provide an accelerated curriculum and were created to serve as the primary tool for desegregation in 1973. There are currently a total of fifty-two magnet schools; forty-six elementary and six high schools. Magnet schools can also be selective enrollment schools and student enrollment may depend on random selection in a lottery.

The Chicago Public Schools system describes charter schools as independently operated public schools that operate outside of the state laws, district initiatives and board policies that regulate traditional neighborhood public schools in the city. Instead, charters operate according to Illinois Charter Law. Charter school teachers are not employees of the city of Chicago, and are therefore unable to benefit from the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) collective bargaining agreement. Instead, teachers in charter schools are employees of the non-profit charter school governing board or a subcontracted management organization hired by the board. Charter schools created after 2003 require 50% of the teachers to be certified.

The Chicago Public Schools system describes contract schools as independently operated public schools under Renaissance 2010. Contract schools are managed by an independent organization, which employs teachers who work for the non-profit organization. Teachers at contract schools are not employees of the city of Chicago, so contract schools are not subject to the collective bargaining agreement of the Chicago Teachers Union. Contract Schools may have an advisory body comprised of parents, community members and school staff. All contract school teachers must be certified.



The Chicago Public Schools system operates and employs CPS teachers and staff for performance schools. Performance schools are therefore subject to the collective bargaining agreement between CPS and the Chicago Teachers Union and other labor organizations. Performance schools are granted flexibility on areas of curriculum, school schedule and budget. Instead of Local School Councils (LSC's), performance schools have an Alternative Local School Council (ALSC), composed of parents, community members, and staff. This data set is appropriate for answering the research questions for this project primarily because:

1. The data from CPS and NCES on school characteristics and student academic preparation exhibits practical examples of the mayor's choices for educating different segments of Chicago's children (the data exhibits the phenomena in question).
2. The data gained from attending CPS board of education meetings and the meetings of involved participants (parents, teacher, community) as well as information gained from accessing their websites, published papers, and archives, provides the counter narrative to the dominant stories and publicity for the Renaissance 2010 initiative.
3. The site for the project, Chicago, is also a good area to study a large urban city (space) and its school involvement because the location is fairly close to the home institution of the researcher and much of the information is easily accessible to the researcher. CPS provides demographic data online, as does NCES, and the majority of the parent/teacher groups. Finally, the expectation of travel to weekly and monthly meetings occurs within city lines).

## **Procedures**

This project uses a mixed methods design that integrates both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the research methods, collection and analyses of data, and when making inferences about the data set and research hypothesis. The qualitative procedures for gathering data selected for this project, particularly observations and document/internet analysis components, will be especially useful in exploring and capturing the multidimensionality of community resistance to local educational policy (Kratwohl, 1998). The methods for this project are designed to give

voice to the students, parents, teachers, and community members of traditionally underserved communities in the city of Chicago. An authentic presentation of counter-stories requires that researchers, as outsiders, value reflexivity as a pedagogical strategy (Duncan, 2002), as failure to do so could cause more harm than good. Duncan (2002) warns of the consequences of the disconnect that occurs when researchers with shared vocabularies have fundamental differences in the ways in which they understand their work and positionality within the field. Citing Delgado's (1996) notion of 'false empathy'—which occurs when a person believes herself to be identifying with others, when the identification is purely superficial or shallow—Duncan (2002) warns that only harm can occur when researchers and other outsiders falsely empathize, and adopt paternal approaches to remedying perceived problems. To avoid the dangers of engaging in the abstraction and detachment which reinforce the negative stereotypes about people in urban communities and schools (Duncan, 2002), member checks and the reflexive journal technique will be employed in this research project, to help to ensure accurate representations of the voice(s) of resistant communities (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

To a large degree, this project focuses on the geography of opportunity for education in the city of Chicago. I follow the strategy outlined by William Tate in an article entitled "Geography of Opportunity": Poverty, Place, and Educational Outcomes" in the 2008 issue of the *Educational Researcher*. In the article, Tate (2008) explores the spatial relationships between education, employment, and industrial science. The overall purpose of this study is to understand community response to public school transformation in the city of Chicago under the Renaissance 2010 initiative. A mixed methods design is necessary to investigate and analyze any trends and details regarding school placement and Chicago demographics, because neither qualitative nor quantitative methods are alone sufficient. The quantitative component of the

study evaluates the spatial distribution and density of public schools throughout the city; while the qualitative component focuses on contextualizing Renaissance 2010 by centering community knowledge and experiences. The qualitative and quantitative components of the study occur at the same time in this parallel methods design.

Like most others who utilize a mixed methods approach to investigate research questions, this project relies on pragmatism as its philosophical orientation, to reject such concepts as one “truth” or “reality” as well as dichotomous oriented solutions which are presented as the only option for educational obstacles (Clarke, 2003). I believe that by employing a mixed methods approach at the onset of the project, both critical race theory (which usually focuses primarily on qualitative methods) and spatial theories like geography of opportunity (which rely on quantitative methods) can be integrated to best interpret what mayoral control has meant for public education and students of color navigating the city of Chicago.

### **Data Collection**

This project employs a mixed methods sequential design, collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, which will then be integrated into the results section.

**Qualitative Component: Observation.** Due to the nature of this particular school reform, and its subsequent quickly changing environments, the planned responses of community members to ‘turnaround’ schools (the opening and closing of schools, termination of teachers, transition of students to different schools) can be captured by attending the meetings of concerned and involved parents, students and teachers. To prepare for the data analysis, the investigator will attend the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) board meetings and public school closure hearings to gain an understanding of the concerns of community members, parents and

teachers regarding the city's Renaissance 2010 program, as well as to find out information released to the public concerning the changes to the public school system.

Public school closure, consolidation, and turnaround hearings are first held in the Board Chamber at 125 S. Clark Street in Chicago, Illinois. The hearing duration is approximately two hours per school, and public comments begin during the last hour. School closure, consolidation, and turnaround hearings are additionally held at the proposed school. The board announces exact dates of the public hearings after the list of proposed school closures, consolidations, and turnarounds is released.

The monthly board meetings are held on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor in the Board Chambers, at 125 South Clark Street in Chicago, Illinois. Registration for the public participation component occurred from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. on the 1st Floor of the Clark Street Lobby. Public participation for these meetings began at approximately 10:30 a.m. and ends at 12:30 p.m. I attended six CPS board meetings, they occurred on the following dates: October 28, 2009, November 23, 2009, December 16, 2009, January 27, 2010, February 24, 2010, and March 24, 2010.

Observation at meetings helps to ensure that I have a greater understanding of the main concerns of parents, teachers and community members regarding Renaissance 2010. Data collection during the observation at meetings will be done using both notes typed onto a laptop as well as a pen and paper. Observation data was of immense value when completing the narrative component of the data analysis. Notes included member opinions and remarks on school reforms, the dates of the meetings, organization names, and at times the names of meetings leaders and members. However, identifiable information was secured and there will be

no dissemination of identifiable information, as stated on the research notification form available for participants. The research notification form is located in Appendix B.

I attended meetings to gain both community narrative and contextual knowledge of the affect of the Ren10 initiative on students and communities, as well as an understanding of the main concerns of community members, parents, and teachers. Each of the community groups have written platforms opposing Renaissance 2010, and one is provided as an example in Appendix C. Additionally, each organization appears to either conduct research or to have some relationship with individuals or groups that do conduct research. Including the perspectives of members from these organizations, as gathered via their websites or other publications, and their testimony at board meetings, will help to ensure that the views of participants are adequately represented in this work. I provided both verbal and written versions of the research project detailing its objectives, methods, and introducing its significance to any members of these organizations that requested the information. Those in attendance who preferred that their comments not be used or considered were encouraged to verbally inform the investigator on site, Jasmine Johnson.

**Quantitative component: Using the 2000 Census and GIS.** The data collection phase of this project also involves secondary sources obtained from newspapers, the city of Chicago's public school website which publishes school information (school location, total number of students by grade; racial demographics of students; and percentage of free or reduced lunch students), and U.S. Census data will provide the demographic information and geographic boundaries of Chicago neighborhoods where schools are located. This data will be supplemented by the data obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which provides school location data (school address).

This project uses secondary data from the public reports of the city of Chicago, retrieved online through the Office of Research, Evaluation and Accountability (retrieved from The Chicago Public Schools, Office of Research, Evaluation and Accountability website: <http://research.cps.k12.il.us/cps/accountweb/>), as well as census data retrieved from the ESRI, Census 2000 TIGER/Line data website (ESRI, Census 2000/TIGER/Line data retrieved from [http://www.esri.com/data/download/census2000\\_tigerline/index.html](http://www.esri.com/data/download/census2000_tigerline/index.html)). TIGER is a common format from the enumeration maps of the U.S. Census, composed of vector files containing topology. TIGER files are block level maps of every village, town and city, including geocoded block faces with address ranges and street numbers, and this exists for the entire United States (Clarke, 2003). Because it is composed of vector files, TIGER represents points, lines, and area features very accurately and are far more efficient than grids. The major limitations of this research project lies with the inability to secure yearly cook county demographic data beyond public census tract information, which is collected every ten years. In an attempt to partially correct for this limitation the demographic information for Chicago neighborhoods from the 1990 Census is included as are the data projections reported by the University of Chicago's Map Collection. The images resulting from this analysis will contribute to the foundational argument of an uneven geography of opportunity for children of color in the city of Chicago.

### **Data Analysis**

This project involves the integration of triangulation techniques (observation, document analysis and secondary analysis) to understand race and space in Chicago Public School policies. During the final stages of the project, a mixed methods approach contributes to the data analysis by allowing the researcher to simultaneously ask confirmatory and exploratory questions. Both provide some insight into the city's investment or disinvestment in Chicago's communities of

color. The quantitative research questions address the density of schools throughout the city, by ward or census block group and the qualitative data contributes a community narrative to the project. Community knowledge is used to help to make sense of the maps and spatial relationships discussed in chapter four.

The quantitative component of this project addresses the research questions using geographic information systems (GIS) software to produce maps that spatially depict Renaissance 2010 school placements and school closings by race, household median income, rental/owner status, and population. GIS is a unique tool for capturing, storing, retrieving, transforming and displaying spatial data from the real world for a particular set of purposes, which are then usually used for geographic analysis (Clarke, 2003). GIS has radically changed the way that institutions, organizations and towns conduct business, as well as the way civilians live, work, and travel so much so that the value and validity of GIS is not often questioned. In 1992, the GIS industry in the U.S. completed its federal standardization efforts, the Spatial Data Transfer Standard (SDTS), which created terminology for features and data structures that have become conventional (Clarke, 2003). Most commonly, GIS is recognized for its use in community planning, however it is also used to capture information on land holdings, to enforce pollution controls, with consumer GPS navigation systems, and for environmental queries, just to note a few. In most cases, and with this project, GIS is based on the best available data at the time, and therefore as with other software applications, incomplete or outdated data has implications on the accuracy of results in real time. Still, GIS is of great necessity to this project precisely because of its ability to handle the distinct research questions raised with this project. These questions are best addressed and analyzed spatially.

To better understand the relationship between Renaissance 2010 schools and neighborhood demographics, kernel density estimation will be combined with chloropleth maps. However, before the kernel density estimation can be applied, the data obtained from the Chicago Public Schools website, the 2000 Census, and NCES was cleaned and then geocoded to a point location based on street address and zip code. After geocoding all schools, I focused on all Chicago Public Schools, Ren10 schools, and closed neighborhood schools to understand how the Ren10 policy has changed schooling for CPS students of color.

By using a chloropleth map of point data for Chicago Public Schools in 1989, 1995, 2004, and 2010, for the variables of race, household median income, renter/owner status, neighborhood schools, closed schools, and Ren10 schools, I visually depict how Ren10 has transformed the geographical distribution of schools throughout the city. School location point data (1995-2010), and Renaissance 2010 schools point data (2004-2010), were geocoded using GIS software to create a geographical depiction of school locations by type, using a background chloropleth map of the 2000 census cook county demographic variables *Black*, *Latino/a*, and *White*, and the 2000 cook county census variables *hhmed*, *renter*, and *owner*.

Kernel density estimation uses point events to depict density as a continuous variable on a map. The darkest areas on the map represent a high density of schools and lighter areas indicate low school density. The kernel estimation, when combined with the chloropleth maps of race, household median income, and population will help to show where schools are (or are not) located within Chicago's wards and neighborhoods. It will also help to understand the relevance between Ren10 school placement and neighborhood school closure, by population. It is important to note that the density measure used in this project represents the geographic availability of schools and not a student's ability to attend or travel to school. I used a radius of



1.3 miles, which should reflect the upper limit of convenient access to school for students.

Therefore, the kernel density estimation is perfectly suited to answer my research questions.

This project situates the implementation of the Renaissance 2010 policy within the context of neoliberalism, to offer an alternative perspective to what is publicized by the city. This project provides a space for the voices of community members of color who are slowly and systematically being excluded from democratically participating in the governance of public schools. By providing an analysis of the relationship between school choice, community involvement, and educational policy in the city of Chicago, another purpose of this project is to contribute to the theory of educational opportunity for students of color. It was my goal that the results from this study help to challenge narratives which define disparities in achievement opportunities as academic achievement gaps, as well as those which assign blame to parents, students and communities using arguments based on cultural deficiency models.

### **Critical Race Theory and Educational Research**

The intellectual origins of critical race theory (CRT) can be credited to the American civil rights tradition and the philosophies of its heroes Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, and W.E.B. Du Bois, the activism and theories from nationalist movements like that of the Black Panthers or Malcolm X, and the earlier work of Critical Legal Studies (CLS) (Delgado and Stefancic, 2000). Although aligned with CLS, CRT differs in its treatment of the intersection of race and law, and the influence of racism on the legal ideology of the United States (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Both theories believe that legal consciousness serves to validate power in the United States, however CRT scholars emphasize the connections between hegemony, race, and racism in American society (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, Thomas, 1995). Critical race theorists began engaging and challenging the nature of law and more specifically colorblind interpretations of law and

meritocracy. Deeming these pseudonyms for White, European American hegemonic control, they created a body of alternative paradigms that countered those narratives, placing in the forefront the perspectives of those who experience multiple forms of discrimination (Parker and Lynn, 2002).

Critical race theory emerged in the mid 1970s. It was the result of the frustration and distress experienced by legal activist scholars of color in their dealings with the slow pace of racial reform and the retraction of many of the gains created during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, Thomas, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Delgado and Stefancic, 2000; Parker and Lynn, 2002). CRT developed in response to the need to understand and express the subtle, yet deeply entrenched varieties of racism, which had come to replace the blatant and more pronounced Jim Crow expressions of the past (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, Thomas, 1995; Delgado and Stefancic, 2000). CRT was borne of necessity. People of color, particularly those within the academy, began centering discussions of race and racism as ideology. They argued specifically against notions of race and racism as something that is experienced individually and can easily be eradicated (Ladson-Billings, 1996; Parker and Lynn, 2002). Critical race theorists argued that race is historically and ideologically ingrained deeply into America's consciousness, through choices that have shaped our legal system and the ways in which privilege and race are understood (Bell, 1992; Parker and Lynn, 2002). Race has become metaphorical, and racism so deeply embedded in social life and economic divisions that it has become normalized. This is far more threatening to the body politic than bio-genetic classifications of phenotype ever were (Ladson-Billings, 1998):

...our conceptions of race, even in a postmodern and/or postcolonial world, are more embedded and fixed than in a previous age. However, this embeddness or fixed-ness has required new language and constructions of race so that denotations are submerged and hidden in ways that are offensive though without

identification. Thus, we develop notions of “conceptual Whiteness” and “conceptual Blackness” (King, 1995) that both do and do not map neatly on to bio-genetic or cultural allegiances. Conceptual categories like “school achievement”, “middle classness”, “maleness”, “beauty,” “intelligence,” and “science” become normative categories of Whiteness, while categories like “gangs,” “welfare recipients,” “basketball players,” and “the underclass” become the marginalized and de-legitimated categories of Blackness. (p. 9)

Critical race theory is particularly useful to explore how the political discourse in Chicago affects the academic achievement of Black students because of its unique dialogue between racial inequities, law, and policy. CRT focuses on the inclusion of critical evaluations of the role of “law” alongside issues of social justice, equity, and ultimately reform. Critical theorists assert that law has traditionally not given expression to the experiences or values of people of color (Brooks, 2004) and therefore, CRT is used to challenge the norm of racial oppression by analyzing myths, preconceived notions, and cultural wisdoms through the form of storytelling (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). CRT scholars attempt to re-construct validated realities with stories and voice that counteract the dominant narrative (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). In this project, materials and narratives of activist organizations (CORE, TSJ, PURE) and community members fit quite well with CRT, as they provide both the theoretical construct to rethink notions of race and researcher positionality, and the methodological tools to disrupt and transform traditional approaches to ethnography (Duncan, 2002). When coupled with qualitative research methodologies, critical race theory can and has been used as a discourse for liberation. A tool to define, expose, and then address issues of social justice by situating the lived experiences of people of color within historical, legal and contemporary social context. Their narratives inform criticisms of Whiteness and White privilege, particularly in educational settings (Parker and Lynn, 2002). Although CRT has not often been used alongside empirical social science to examine policy, Parks (2007) makes the case that, although not under the name

of CRT, there has been much empirical research conducted that has combined race, science and legal scholarship. Parks (2007) contends that critical race theorists should apply empirical modes of understanding race and racism within legal institutions and doctrine more often. Within the community of critical race theorists, there has been some resistance to synthesizing CRT and empirical social science in part because some worry that including quantitative data can undermine the power of (counter) narrative. I disagree. I recognize the power of perspective that can result from a rich descriptive narrative, and I contend that including empirical methods can only serve to strengthen the validity of narrative. I therefore employ Parks' (2007) integrative model of CRT, which argues that social science and CRT can together: (a) expose racism in its many locations; (b) identify the effect of racism on individuals as well as institutions; and finally (c) work together in part as an activist agenda to mount an attack against racism using public policy arguments.

CRT interacts with the classical approaches the traditional sociological theories in its valuation of agency, systemic structures and functionalism. With an emphasis on particularity, perspective, and context, CRT is applicable to both structural and individual experiences when analyzing elements of racial subjugation (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Waters, 1994). Critical race theory has three main goals: (a) to examine race and racism by legitimating alternative interpretations, specifically storytelling and narrative; (b) to recognize race as a social construct, without negating the importance of ending expressions of racial subordination; and (c) to locate and reveal the different relationships between race and domination (Parker and Lynn, 2002). Critical race theorists' emphasis on narrative as storytelling stems from the history of evidence gathering and fact finding in discrimination cases but, for critical race theorists, the stories of the victims of discrimination are key to countering the dominant stories on racial discourse which

focus on meritocracy, equality and the market (Parker and Lynn, 2002). It is by validating these voices and stories that current hierarchal relationships of power can be understood contextually, through the racialized relationships on which they were founded (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Parker and Lynn, 2002). Naming one's own reality also contributes to the 'psychic preservation of marginalized groups' (p. 14) by disrupting the internalization of stereotypic images that have been constructed by certain groups to maintain power (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Finally, storytelling for CRT can cause a 'cognitive conflict' that directly affects the oppressor by objecting to the existing stories on education, housing policies, or the market, as justifications for the power dynamics that maintain their privilege (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 14). By exposing the ways in which education laws and policies in Chicago continue to protect White interests over those of people of color, this project contributes to the discourse of liberation by offering a multilayered presentation of the stories and realities of the teachers, students, and parents who refuse to be silenced. Disrupting the rationale of ignoring communities, and communicating these experiences is the first step in understanding and addressing the complexities of racism in education (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lipman, 2004).

CRT exists precisely because of the advantages accrued to, and the meanings ascribed to, Whiteness. It is precisely a tool for "the deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses, the reconstruction of human agency and the construction of equitable and socially just relations of power" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 9). When used in combination with ethnographic methods of observation and document analysis, GIS maps and spatial statistics contribute both visual and structurally to the 'thick description' used to document institutional racism and community voice(s). This project provides the epistemologies, or ways of knowing, of many intersecting

groups (parents, teachers, activists, community leaders) and connects theory to practice and activism.

### **Methodological Assumptions**

An important methodological assumption of this project is the acceptance that race shapes epistemology (Ladson-Billings and Donnor, 2008). This project rests heavily on the foundation created by DuBois' (1935) notion of a "double consciousness" although the term is broadened in this case to include the multiple and varying consciousness of Black Chicagoans expected by gender, wealth, socioeconomic status, political view and affiliation and religious differences. Although this project focuses specifically on the education offered to Black students within the Chicago Public Schools system, it acknowledges that the educational opportunities available for low-income students and Latino/a students around the city sometimes echoes those experiences.

Thus despite my focus on African Americans and their experiences I recognize that this work is important for any marginalized group. The focus on both Black and Latino/a Chicagoans within this project occurs authentically, and is the result of the selection of closed neighborhood schools and Ren10 schools. The results of applying the kernel density estimation and choropleth maps to CPS point data requires a focus on both Latino/a and Black neighborhoods, and in some cases Black census tracts to a larger extent. This project attempts to understand the epistemological legitimacy of Black and Latino/a cultural 'ways of knowing', and seeks to speak to the "visionary pragmatism" which links the visionary thinking and practical actions of concerned parent, teacher and community members surrounding Renaissance 2010 reforms (Collins, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2008). This project recognizes the divergences and internal variations within communities of differently situated Chicagoans. As well as the likelihood that

those that share similar national or ethnic origins may align themselves politically with the mayor and other proponents of privatization who's ways of knowing take precedent over those of directly affected communities of students, parents, and teachers. This project does not seek to romanticize the actions or views of those opposed to Renaissance 2010, but to accurately present the narrative and agency of Chicagoans involved in educational reforms which fall outside of the narratives of the members of the Chicago Board of Education, the mayor, and other interested parties.

### **Significance of Study**

This project is significant because Chicago's Renaissance 2010 is a model for the nation. Secretary of State Arne Duncan and President Obama have applied Chicago's mayoral control and business partnerships to the nation in the way of their newest education policy Race to the Top (RTTT). RTTT reinforces testing as accountability, encourages states to adopt data driven models, and centers charter school development as a major priority for city leaders. By investigating the consequences of Renaissance 2010 for Black students in Chicago this project will offer the historical, racial and class implications which can be used to improve the newest education policy RTTT.

Race in western societies is at once embedded, fixed and fluid (Ladson-Billings, 1998)—constantly recreating itself, while denying its own existence. This project contributes to and supports Omi and Winant's (1994) theory of racial formation, which focuses on the continuing significance of race and its constant transformation, or fluidity, in western societies. More importantly, this project offers both a macroanalysis and a microanalysis of the intersections between race, class and education in its use of mapping and spatial analysis (macro) and its qualitative components of participant observation and storytelling (micro). Critical race theory

contributes significantly to the significance of this project—not only for its value of narrative, but because it can be used to not only understand social institutions but transform them as well (Delgado and Stefancic, 2000). The organizations included in the study work specifically to center race and include the voice of students, parents and teachers within the political discourse surrounding the best course for educating all of Chicago's students. This data is expected to extend the understanding of the impact of spatial isolation in urban school reform and, by foregrounding race, this project contributes to the discourse of public space and the negotiations of power relations.

Finally, this research project contributes to the scholarship on geography of opportunity and urban school reform in the era of neoliberalism, and its impact on students of color in global cities. I anticipate that my research will ultimately allow for a linear depiction of the structural influences that limit the educational opportunities of the city's Black and Latino/a students. This project counters notions of student, teacher, and parental lack of agency and commitment to schooling, and highlights the continued and historic disinvestment of the city's public officials in its constituents of color. In this way, this project is significant because it analyzes the link between policy (Renaissance 2010), democratic participation, and student educational opportunity.



## Chapter 4

### Public Education, the Community & the City

*[On Renaissance 2010] We realize that this is politically unpopular but we won't do the easy thing and walk away.*

*--CEO Ron Huberman, Committee of Education hearing, 2/21/2010*

The Altgeld Gardens public housing development and the Carver School were created around the same time in 1944 and, just as Altgeld Gardens welcomed its first residents, the Carver School welcomed its first pupils (Altgeld Carver Alumni Association, 1993). And, as the Altgeld community grew to fill the residences of Riverdale, so did the student population of Carver H.S. In 2000, the neighborhood school became the neighborhood military school. Then, six years later, Carver Area High School was 'turned-around'. It became Carver Military Academy, a selective enrollment military school. Local Riverdale students were no longer admitted, and instead they were reassigned to Fenger High School. Fenger H.S. is located in the Roseland community, five miles away from the Carver facility.

The entrance of a multitude of new students into a facility with few resources increased the preexisting tension between Riverdale and Roseland students. In the summer, a few months before the beginning of the fall semester, all CPS employees (including veteran teachers, administrators and staff) working at Fenger High School were terminated through a process called 'turnaround'. Out of the 100 terminated teachers, 9 were rehired, and invited to return to the campus. Thus, on September 24, 2009, when an after-school fight erupted in the front of the South Side neighborhood high school, the neighborhood school was depleted of the majority of its institutional knowledge.

Many of the schools young, first time teachers were not familiar with the neighborhood, its students, or its social climate. The new staff was unaware of the preexisting tensions between

some of the Roseland and Riverdale students. And many of the students themselves were strangers to the neighborhood and the school. News of the fatal beating of honor student Derrion Albert, spread quickly. In route to the bus stop, the 16 year old was caught in an erupting mob attack near the school building. His violent death did not receive such widespread media attention because of the rarity of CPS violence—more than thirty CPS students had been killed by May of that year (ABC Local News). Albert’s murder received global attention because his beating was taped by a student and posted to YouTube, at a time when the eyes of the world were tuned to Chicago. A week later, Chicago lost its bid for the 2016 Summer Olympics.

By 6am Wednesday, December 16, 2009 parents, students, and community organizers from the Riverdale neighborhood were in line. They arrived at CPS’ headquarters downtown to sign up to speak for two minutes during the public participation component of the monthly Board of Education meeting. Around 11am, shortly after the board meeting began, they presented the Board with a 38-page proposal for an open enrollment neighborhood high school that shared space with Carver Military. Together students unraveled a 10-foot-long petition with more than 1300 signatures in support of the Hazel Johnson School for Environmental Justice. One speaker noted that the Carver facility was underutilized (26.5% utilized), and had space for at least 1500 additional students. Another added that the Board closes open enrollment neighborhood schools when the facility is just 40% utilized.

One by one, supporters of the Altgeld Gardens proposal informed the board of the negative consequences resulting from their latest education reform. Community members who criticized Ren10 in its earliest years again reminded the board of the increased violence in ‘feeder’ schools. Students currently enrolled at Fenger H.S. testified to the daily violence they experienced. Community organizers testified that the school climate created at Fenger H.S. from

Ren10's school turnarounds, consolidations, and closures, was continually repeated throughout the city. A displaced teacher made the connection between the recent turnaround and the increased violence. He insisted that the community needed a neighborhood school with a Local School Council and an experienced staff to prevent other violent outbreaks. In response to the school proposal and testimony presented by students, parents, and community members, Chief Executive Officer Robert Runcie revealed the plan to place a Chicago International Charter School (CICS) on the Carver campus. He then noted that the board would provide additional security measures for Fenger, and closed with the fact that his staff had facilitated over 150 transfers of students dissatisfied with Fenger H.S.

Supporters of the Altgeld Gardens school proposal requested an emergency meeting between CPS officials and residents of the Riverdale community, insisting that in the interim Carver Military immediately accept its neighborhood students. Although Carver did not open its doors to its neighborhood students, members from the board agreed to meet with community members. After ongoing negotiations, the proposal for the Hazel Johnson School for Environmental Justice was rejected. Liberty Investors' CICS would open in the fall of 2010 on the Carver campus. CPS representatives suggested that Altgeld students transfer from Fenger, enroll in the districts online learning program, or pursue a G.E.D. instead of a high school diploma.

### **Navigating Place, Space & Politics: Black Chicagoans Before the Great Migration**

To fully understand how CPS administrators and CPS parents, teachers, and students became so utterly disconnected one must understand the plan for Chicago's future and a bit more of the city's history of intersections between politics, power, and race.

During the time of national de jure segregation, Chicago was in its earliest phase of development and class and labor relations were a primary focus. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, the first wave of Black migrants reached Chicago on the Underground Railroad (Boyd, 2008). Still the race relations of the late nineteenth century were such that Black and White elites pursued an integrationist agenda together. Although racial hostility continued to exist, Blacks and Whites lived in close proximity with little to no violence primarily because of the following three reasons: (a) the distribution and population of Blacks in the city; (b) Blacks posed no threat to the labor opportunities of Whites; and (c) Blacks were unable to compete for political power in the city (Boyd, 2008). By 1861, there were only about one thousand Blacks in the city, and most resided separately from Whites on the less desirable land clustered along the south branch of the Chicago River (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). By 1875, Chicago's earliest settlers totaled just under 300,000 residents, and the 3,600 Black settlers were a mere 1.2 percent of the total population (Boyd, 2008). Additionally, Blacks worked primarily as domestic and personal service workers and were excluded from the trade, manufacturing and clerical positions favored by Whites. Due to the labor market segmentation that existed during Chicago's earliest years there was minimal racially motivated job competition (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). The combination of their small population and the instability and competitiveness of the city's early machine meant that Blacks made no big waves during local elections (Boyd, 2008).

To attain political goals, Black leaders relied on client-patron relationships with empowered Whites. Their social ties to Whites with political power provided access to the resources they needed to themselves become politically empowered (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). Black elite cultivated social relationships during their business dealings with Republican politicians, the wealthy, and liberals who would later become their allies. Politically

connected White allies pushed their integrationist agenda in the legislature, while Blacks straddled the line between writing letters and speaking at conferences. They were careful to maintain a low profile that wouldn't upset the existing racial harmony (Boyd, 2008). From 1870 to 1890, Black leaders and their allies focused on repealing the Illinois Black laws, desegregating schools, and winning voting rights for Black men. Thanks to both the use of an Austrian Ballot (which obscured their existence amongst White representatives) and their connections to central White figures, Blacks eventually gained formal representation at the state and county level (Boyd, 2008). These community-building strategies continued to be used by the Black elite to push for racial equality. Still, at the local level, politically minded Blacks remained unable to be elected to the coveted aldermanic seats in their wards. With no bargaining power, Black elites focused locally on getting access to material and economic resources for their communities (Boyd, 2008). It is important to recognize that these Black elites were chosen as representatives not by other Blacks but by White leaders in decision-making positions. Their appointments did not signify their ability to represent the views and interests of the majority of Black Chicagoans. In fact Black elites had long resisted their forced proximity to other Blacks whom they considered beneath them, and they attempted to distance themselves both socially and physically from the new arrivals (Boyd, 2008). Similarly, White elites had little connection to the majority of Black constituents, and Black elites structured their new leadership roles in ways that would be more comfortable for Whites. This meant that they worked to minimize racial conflict and regulate the social behavior of other Blacks. These old settlers were beholden to their patrons and not the Black populace, and despite the appearance that they represented them, Black elites were limited in their ability to completely act in the interests of their constituents (Boyd, 2008). Still, within context, what they achieved was quite phenomenal and radical, despite their limitations.

Boyd (2008) writes that their strategies and their very ideology was “...grounded in their structural position. Their fervent interracialism and dedication to desegregation reflected the opportunities available to them given their access to White elites” (p. 7). Because of the work of the city’s Black elites, Blacks were not viewed as a threat to White interests. They created a space where Blacks could and would push for integration and racial equality at a time when the ideology of the nation was in full support of Black inferiority, slavery, and de jure segregation. It would not be until much later, after the 1900s, when the Black population would the undefined ‘comfort’ threshold. Afterwards, Blacks would be seen as an economic, physical, and political threat. During their quest for political advancement Blacks transformed from the city’s (albeit uninvited and obscure) tolerated residents to its local pariah.

### **Jim Crow and the Black Belt: Black Chicagoans After the Great Migration**

During subsequent years, the conditions that produced the early forms of racial harmony between Black and White settlers changed drastically. During the first phase of the Great Migration (1910-1940), Chicago’s Black population rose by 77 percent, from 278,000 to nearly half a million (Street, 2007). Growing numbers of Blacks and Latinas/os joined the competition for jobs, housing, and schools, and only the politicians really welcomed the migrants (Drake and Cayton, 1993). The rising number of immigrants began competing for the resources that had been traditionally reserved for Whites. As Black men entered the manufacturing industry they entered the sights of working class White ethnics and became involved in existing labor disputes (Boyd, 2008). Additionally, the construction of housing slowed during World War I making it more difficult for Whites to relocate in their escape from an increasing Black population (Boyd, 2008). In response, Whites began to abandon their tolerance for integration and push for segregation.

White hostility and violence increased as well, and during 1917 the Chicago Real Estate Board joined the racial containment campaign by instituting restrictive covenants (Boyd, 2008). The older elite's integrationist agenda was defeated by both the renewed interest in Jim Crow and a burgeoning new Black elite. Reigning from 1890-1930 Boyd (2008) refers to the new Black elites as 'self-help advocates' who represented a professional leadership class that was invested in developing (not fighting against) the ghetto created in the Black Belt. Their position was a clear shift from that taken by early Black settlers (1870-1900), who pushed for integration. Instead they began to throw their support behind developing community organizations and institutions in the Black Belt (Boyd, 2008). This ideology was in line with the national arguments of other Blacks leaders of the time. During this period, Marcus Garvey advocated for self-improvement and racial solidarity, Carter G. Woodson published the *Journal of Negro History*, and the Harlem Renaissance was on the rise.

Riding this wave, the new Black elites recognized the value of a growing and captive market indeterminately confined to one space; they planned to attract both their dollar and their vote (Boyd, 2008). Instead of challenging segregation like the leaders before them, they believed that creating profitable, Black owned institutions and civic organizations within the Black Belt was a path towards political and economic self-empowerment (Boyd, 2008). By utilizing their individual relationships with Whites, self help elites planned to establish businesses and institutions that catered to Black migrants (Boyd, 2008). While the number of community organizations and businesses serving Black Belt residents increased, Blacks also developed client-patron relationships with the city's Republican leadership. Timing was important. Their relationships were solidified because of the precarious political balance of power at the time and

the ability of the concentrated electorate located in the Second and Third Wards to swing the vote (Boyd, 2008).

For Blacks in Chicago during the Great Migration, political empowerment, political representation, and harnessing ones political rights were viewed as more important than integration itself (Street, 2007). Each wave of Black migrants was recruited by precinct captains and schooled in the voting process, which resulted in a closely-knit community of almost homogenous voters (Drake and Cayton, 1993). Precinct captains worked directly with the voters and reported to ward committeemen (alderman), who were responsible for “delivering the vote” to superiors like then mayor William Thompson (Drake and Cayton, 1993). Black wards helped to guarantee the Republican’s stronghold, and ward leaders received many of Mayor Thompson’s resources. The growing number of Black voters and the efforts of the Alpha Suffrage Club, a women’s political organization founded by Ida B. Wells, were responsible for the election of Oscar De Priest, Chicago’s first Black alderman (Boyd, 2008). Blacks were also appointed and elected to other city and state offices, and eventually the Black community became one of the smoothest running cogs in the machine, taking over both the Second and Third Wards as early as the 1920s (Drake and Cayton, 1993). Politically empowered Blacks attempted to obtain justice in courtrooms, police protection (including against policemen themselves), civil service jobs and their share of street lights, libraries, sewers and playgrounds (Drake and Cayton, 1993). Although the foundation of their political power heavily relied on their individual relationships with powerful Whites within the machine, these new professionalized elites can be credited with establishing institutions and businesses during the time of economic deprivation, providing the foundation for the political and social organizations of future Black Chicagoans (Boyd, 2008).



In creating a safe space with multiple representations of Black economic and political success, they manifested stark contrasts to the myths of Black inferiority. And, in developing the Black Belt their institutions contributed to Blacks decreased tolerance of racism in the North while making the conditions of racial subordination and confinement easier to endure (Boyd, 2008). Drake and Cayton (1993) write,

If working as servants, Negroes must be properly deferential to the White people upon whom they depend for meager wages and tips. In fact, they often have to overdo their act in order to earn a living; as they phrase it, they have to “Uncle Tom” to “Mr. Charley” a bit to survive. If working in a factory, they must take orders from a White managerial personnel and associate with White workers who, they know, do not accept them as social equals. If self employed, they are continually frustrated by the indirect restrictions imposed upon Negro business and professional men. If civil servants, they are in continuous contact with situations that emphasize their ghetto existence and subordinate status. But, when work is over, the pressure of the White world is lifted. Within Bronzeville Negroes are at home. (p. 387)

Boyd (2008) argues that in nurturing and developing the Black Belt, the new Black elites focus on management of the ghetto failed to provide any leadership for their captive market. In failing to directly challenge the conditions of urban racial subordination, their decision to profit from the segregation of Blacks in the North reproduced it (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). Yet Black Belt residents were well aware of the ambitions for power and prestige that motivated their leaders, as did they recognize that the power of their leaders was solely dependent on Whites who could crush them at any moment (Drake and Cayton, 1993). They were skeptical of their leaders and sincerity was not easily discerned. This knowledge fostered a large degree of ‘cynical realism’ wherein they accepted their leaders as fallible and their expectations of them were realistic (Drake and Cayton, 1993, p. 394). And indeed the economic and political interests of Black elites were closely related to the economic interests of their White patrons. Both were served by the maintenance of the racial segregation. For example, the confinement of Blacks to one area is the very reason that Black officials were elected. Elites

recognized that if Blacks were dispersed throughout the city, they would not win the vote of Whites (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). The high concentration of Blacks in the heterogeneous Black Belt on the South Side aided in the seating of Blacks as alderman and eventually Congressmen (Hawking, 1991; Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). As the ultimate expression of their self-help ideology they strongly believed that if anyone should profit at the expense of poor Blacks, it should be them. They theorized that their individual economic and political success represented advancement for the race (Boyd, 2008). It was with this logic that they embraced the exploitative practices of White property owners to demonstrate the ability of Blacks to meet bourgeois standards of American success (Boyd, 2008).

However, the accumulation strategies they promoted as beneficiary for the entire Black race was in direct conflict with the advancement of their individual status. The client-patron relationships they established financially relied on the philanthropic and industrial decisions of White patrons. Within their self-help framework, their financial and electoral success was determined by relationships that encouraged Black political and social leaders to place the desires and concerns of Whites over those of economically vulnerable Blacks (Boyd, 2008). The political support of Black leaders relied not on their constituents but the political support of Whites within the Republican machine. Therefore challenging racial inequities did not outrank the importance of the successful delivery of votes. And even if it did, the structure of the machine prioritized patronage over issues when distributing rewards, so although Blacks were incorporated into the machine, they lacked the power to make demands on the behalf of their constituents (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). For example their patronage rewards did not address the racial discrimination faced by Black business owners in the Second and Third Wards. These businessmen and women started their enterprises with less capital than their competitors

and had access to less credit (Boyd, 2008). Racial discrimination limited their ability to expand, improve or relocate—all factors that considerably affected their ability to compete with the White business owners who dominated the Black Belt throughout the Great Migration (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). Additionally, Black proprietors often complained that Black patrons refused to trade with them—their money for their services or goods—and that when possible they seemed to prefer to do business with Whites (Drake and Cayton, 1993). In defense of their purchasing power many Blacks asserted that both lower prices and a willingness to grant credit factored largely into their shopping choices (Drake and Cayton, 1993). And, as indicated earlier, Black establishments operated with significantly less capital than their competitors. Given these dynamics Blacks were never able to create a sustainable community that was economically self-sufficient (Boyd, 2008).

During the 1920s when Blacks were largely Republican, their small electorate was critical in local elections. However by the 1930s, Black wards could barely represent a majority in their party during the mayoral election (Grimshaw, 1992). Boyd (2008) argued that one of the reasons for the lackluster response of Blacks at the polls during the 1930s and 1940s could be attributed to ripples from the Great Depression. The city itself was already facing a financial crisis because of a state mandated suspension of tax collections from 1927-1929 (Boyd, 2008). The combination of continued spending and borrowing and a backlog of unpaid taxes resulted in the city's inability to pay its workers. These conditions encouraged large numbers of White workers to venture back into the service jobs they would not have considered in more prosperous times. This increased the competition for labor between Whites and other ethnic groups. Black residents in Chicago were disproportionately affected by the disaster primarily because their labor was largely concentrated in the most vulnerable service positions (Boyd, 2008). Although

many Blacks were employed in other areas, the majority of Black service workers provided luxury services (porters, domestics, personal servants, elevator and bathroom attendants) and they were therefore first in line to lose their wages given both the local and national economic depression (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). The residents of the Black Belt were disproportionately affected by the disaster and they resided in a city that was not likely to provide relief. Their problems were exacerbated by the continual influx of Black migrants during harsh economic times. The social service organizations that served the South Side were financially limited and unable to meet the needs of the growing Black community (Boyd, 2008). For residents of the Black Belt, the surge of in-migration, combined with inadequate city building programs, created a severe housing shortage (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). The housing that existed for African Americans was overcrowded and decrepit, while simultaneously rare and expensive (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). Thus, Blacks were squeezed out of industry while relegated to environments with fixed boundaries that became increasingly claustrophobic. And as their resources and economic circumstances deteriorated, Blacks became less than impressed with both the machine and the accommodationist strategy of elite Black leaders (Boyd, 2008). The racist public policies that implemented and encouraged restrictive housing covenants, segregated and inferior health care, severe employment discrimination, and overcrowded public schools with double-shifts offset any patronage favors (Grimshaw, 1992).

Instead, a large portion of the Black electorate chose its own representation to fight the Democratic machine (Grimshaw, 1992; Boyd, 2008). Blacks representing each social class lived in the Black Belt, and although more affluent Blacks lived in the southern end of the district, and the poor lived at the northern end, the heterogeneous area allowed for strong coalition building

(Hawking, 1991; Grimshaw, 1992). Additionally, because of the racial discrimination Blacks experienced in the employment sector, hidden amongst those working unskilled and service jobs was a substantial amount of Black workers with middle class values, a middle class education, and middle class behaviors (Grimshaw, 1992). Black Belt residents began to throw their support behind radical racial organizations that advocated for structural change. Black Belt residents became involved with community organizations that took an active stance against housing and employment discrimination, and embraced pro-labor/pro-union organization efforts within the city (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). In stark contrast to the accommodationist strategies of the self-help regime, collective action strategies like pickets, boycotts, and political demonstrations became the popular tactic for racial advancement (Boyd, 2008). The party's Black ward leaders had to contend with a middle class that offered candidates who addressed racism and mounted repeated challenges against the machine (Grimshaw, 1992; Street, 2007; Boyd, 2008). The factionalism within the Democratic Party weakened the machines electoral performance in Black wards (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008).

Unable to deliver the vote, self-help committeemen could claim little of the machine's resources. In 1932, Anton Cermak was elected over the candidate favored by the majority of Blacks, William "Big Bill the Builder" Thompson (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). Thus, the Democratic machine was "constructed and acquired its hegemony with scant Black support" (Drake and Cayton 1993, p.95). With little Black support Cermak was under no obligation to maintain the patronage hires of the previous incumbent and he immediately removed a number of Blacks from city jobs, valued appointments, and civil service positions (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). After Cermak's death in 1934, the new Democratic mayor Edward Kelly adopted a more appealing attitude toward his Black constituents. Not only

did he return the revoked positions of the Cermak administration, but he also appointed a Black person to the school board, named a Black man as chief of police, appointed another as chairman of the Chicago Housing Authority and placed one on the ticket to be a judge of the municipal court (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993; Street, 2007; Boyd, 2008). Symbolically Kelly supported desegregation, and although he was a Democrat his strategy garnered him the support of the city's Republican Blacks (Boyd, 2008). At the local level, a combination of factors were involved in the conversion of Chicago's Blacks from the Republican Party to the Democrat machine. The most commonly cited upon were the "housekeeping" services (fixing potholes, collecting garbage) which redefined public services as private favors; the high yield of patronage contracts and jobs available after the Democrats acquired a monopoly over city and county offices; and the impact of the Great Depression which discredited the Republican party (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). In addition to Kelly's local efforts, the policies of the national administration between the 1930s and 1950s helped to transform Black politics from an electorate that was largely Republican to one that was solidly Democratic (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). Drake and Cayton (1993) wrote that people began to "vote for bread and butter instead of for the memory of Abraham Lincoln" (p. 88). Collective values played a significant role in the conversion of Blacks nationally and locally from Republicans to Democrats.

Although some argue that the Democrat's New Deal lured Blacks to exchange their vote in return for social and economic favors, Black voters valued representation and empowerment in addition to the traditional patronage favors (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). When President Roosevelt began to explicitly address the issues of racial discrimination and marginalization in a 1944 speech in Chicago, the partnership between Black voters and the

national Democratic Party was sealed (Hawking, 1991; Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). Grimshaw (1992) argues that although this relationship developed on the national level, Black allegiance to the local Democratic machine did not automatically materialize. Black voters, won over by FDR's promise of racial equality, easily distinguished between the President's New Deal message of racial equality, and the 'raw deal' silence offered by the local machine (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). Grimshaw (1992) challenges patronage interpretations with historical evidence that suggests that it was race, and more importantly the Democratic machine's refusal to address racial discrimination in a real way, that turned off the majority of Black voters. Alongside the national Democratic Party's message of racial reform, the local party appeared all the more backwards and racist (Grimshaw, 1992; Drake and Cayton, 1993). According to Grimshaw (1992), the racial tension between the Democratic Party and Black Chicagoans was calmed when the party ousted its two-term mayor Martin Kennelly in favor of its chairman Richard J. Daley. Kennelly, who served after Kelly, adopted a similar attitude to his Black constituents as that of Cermak. Hoping to secure the White vote Kennelly used racist campaign tactics against Daley, which drove Blacks to the polls and to the machine. They wouldn't turn away again until the emergence of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. But at the time that Daley was announced as Kennelly's replacement, his relationship with Black Chicagoans was so bad that the coup was viewed as a positive response to their complaints and William "Boss" Dawson, a popular ward committeemen, was admired for engineering the plan (Grimshaw, 1992; Boyd, 2008).

Thus the middle of the 1950s, there was no longer an extreme gap between the rhetoric of the national party and the local Democratic Party (Grimshaw, 1992). After the Supreme Court struck down restrictive housing covenants in 1948 (*Shelly v. Kraemer*) a large percentage of the

middle class began to exit the Black Belt (Grimshaw, 1992). Between 1950 and 1960, the Black population in Chicago doubled, and the addition of new neighborhoods in the Black Belt led to an increased representation in city government (Hawking, 1991; Drake and Cayton, 1993). There were more precinct captains, ward officials and symbolic appointments. Black entrepreneurs began to venture into real estate, insurance, restaurants, taverns, cabs company's, cosmetics, and publishing (Drake and Cayton, 1993). The political system that was created aligned a coalition of Black committeemen with ward committeeman William Dawson. Dawson headed a successful multi-ward submachine within the Democratic machine with the help of patronage (Hawking, 1991; Grimshaw, 1992; Cohen & Taylor, 2000; Boyd, 2008). Still his submachine offered the same limitations Black Belt residents were plagued with in the past. Although he used racial rhetoric to gain Black support, after he officially entered the machine he became silent on racial equality issues (Boyd, 2008). As the head of the Black submachine, Dawson's influence extended into several wards and his power grew simultaneously with the increasing Black population (Hawking, 1991; Cohen & Taylor, 2000; Green, 2005).

Many of those migrants settled in the Douglas/Grand Boulevard communities (Boyd, 2008). One of the main concerns of residents was the availability of private housing, and within that issue were specific concerns relating to the discriminatory practices within public housing. Although Blacks continued to settle on the South Side of the city, like White residents of public housing facilities, business owners in other parts of the city were unhappy with such changes to the city. The growing population was of increasing concern to White businessmen who feared both the loss of middle class White consumers and the increasing presence of poor Blacks (Boyd, 2008). Business owners in the Loop and Douglas feared that Black presence would discourage the patronization of their establishments and lower the value of their property (Boyd, 2008). In



response to their fears of the spread of blight, they united to form the South Side Planning Board and succeeded in the passage of the Redevelopment and Relocation Acts. With public funds they were authorized to acquire, clear, and sell land at reduced prices to private developers (Boyd, 2008, p. 34). They also demolished the homes in the area deeming them slums, and replaced them with housing options for their employees. In the case of Michael Reese Hospital and the Illinois Institute of Technology, they used their authority to expand their campuses (Boyd, 2008). The South Side Planning Board and its subsequent actions are one example of White privilege disguised as urban renewal. These businessmen were able to claim public spaces, using public funds, to protect their private interests. They were additionally able to dispose of the unwanted largely Black population that they viewed as a threat to their property interests. Douglas residents who disputed the characterization of their homes as slums were subsequently displaced—there was no relocation plan established and they could not afford to live in the new developments. Second and Third Ward residents continued to receive symbolic representation and personal favors while racial power imbalances were left unchecked (Boyd, 2008). If anything, the Dawson's submachine used its resources to stifle the potential uprisings of civic and business organizations that sought to challenge the status quo (Boyd, 2008). In fact some members of the leadership originally planned to invest in the urban renewal projects until the plan gained the negative reputation of the 'Negro removal' project (Boyd, 2008). Dissenters, particularly a Republican alderman of the Third Ward, rallied thirteen city council members and tried to place a ban on the discrimination because it used public funds. Their actions were ultimately unsuccessful. The Negro removal plans were perhaps the first instance of gentrification in the Second and Third Wards. A massive amount of businesses and families were displaced, and the area experienced a large decline in population. With no relocation plan in

place, advocates of urban renewal partnered with the Chicago Housing Authority, which then planned to construct public housing to serve the dislocated residents (Boyd, 2008). It was in this way that both the South Side Planning Board and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) contributed to the concentration of poverty in the Douglas/Grand Boulevard communities. By the end of the project, the Douglas/Grand Boulevard communities held the largest concentration of public housing in the nation and in close proximity were pockets of affluence (Boyd, 2008, p. 35). The projects partitioned the poorest Blacks within a highly visible part of the city. They also created safe spaces for the middle class and Black elites. Their spaces stood in stark material and spatial contrast to their neighbors, and aligned their property interests with the business community. The stage had been set, and there was then a large gap between the current and potential property values for the area. This encouraged the site to be an appealing place for future ‘urban renewal’ projects. Throughout the crisis, Dawson and his Black submachine remained relatively silent on the issue. Their lack of leadership and failure to challenge both the Boards project and the CHA’s solution encouraged not only gentrification and racial displacement but laid the foundation for future intraracial and interracial conflict in the area (Boyd, 2008).

### **Challenging White Flight: The Chicago 21 Plan**

*...one of the great acts in the renaissance of the city...*  
*--Mayor Richard J. Daley on the Chicago 21 Plan*  
*Time Magazine, July 2, 1973*

Dawson’s power reached its highest point when he used his clout to elect Richard J. Daley. After he became mayor, Daley eliminated Dawson’s patronage abilities and began to deal directly with Black Democratic committeemen. Using the political savvy that characterized the first half of his administration, Daley never publicly challenged Dawson. He did however check his power and designs on building an empire within the machine, by replacing Dawson loyalists

with committeemen who were loyal to him (Grimshaw, 1992). He allowed Dawson to retain his congressional seat, and quickly eliminated his influence within the machine, in an attempt to enjoy continued Black electoral support. At the time, a battle began between Black progressives (Timuel Black, Charlie Chew, Fred Hubbard) who organized grassroots campaigns to garner community support, and Black candidates who belonged to the Democratic machine. Of course, the Black members of the machine, known as the silent six, were likely to politically acquiesce to Daley's policies (Hawkins, 1991; Cohen & Taylor, 2000; Neckerman, 2007). After Daley's structural changes Black committeemen began to deal directly with the mayor. Although this dispersed the political power of the Black community, it allowed Daley to acquire virtually all of the available power (Hawkins, 1991; Grimshaw, 1992).

Mayor Richard J. Daley (1955-1976) manipulated the increasing racial tension and economic competition in the city to his political advantage. Daley courted Black voters during the early years of his campaign by speaking out against restrictive residential covenants (Cohen & Taylor, 2000). Organizational loyalty to the machine was replaced by personal loyalty to the mayor. Loyal Black politicians were selected for municipal positions that controlled a small degree of jobs, but wielded even less political power. Grimshaw (1992) writes that although they were expected to be completely faithful, "for Black ward leaders the machine was not the benign economic enterprise we find in the literature, where compliance is secured by material rewards. It was primarily a paramilitary organization, in which compliance was compelled through coercion" (p. 95). Upon his election Daley stripped the council of its budgetary control and any other authority it had previously experienced and he ruled the city much like a dictator (Grimshaw, 1992, p. 185). If you were not Irish and male during Daley's reign, you did not benefit in any significant ways his leadership (Grimshaw, 1992). He shifted the machines focus

from economic decision making to the enhancement of organizational (mayoral) control and power (Grimshaw, 1992). So although Black wards delivered the most electoral units, their ward leaders received little for their efforts. In fact rewards and promotions did not come from competence or political prowess. Instead popular elites or ‘civic leaders’ with little political experience and skill were recruited from outside of the ward. Although he had to force some wards to accept his appointed leaders over their elected ones, this allowed the mayor to retain the control he sought. The ‘silent six’ made relatively few demands of the mayor and the machines resources (Grimshaw, 1992). The new system benefited the Democratic machine much more than it did any Black community. Between 1940 and 1960, the percentage of White votes dropped from 87 to 72 percent while the percentage of Black votes increased from 8 to 20 percent (Boyd, 2008). The machine received its most reliable voting block while Blacks received a much smaller percentage of patronage benefits (Hawkins, 1991; Grimshaw, 1992; Dreier, Mollenkopf, & Swanstrom, 2004). More importantly, Blacks were unable to establish a powerful presence in a Democratic machine where they were rarely consulted on important issues and were excluded from the decision making process (Boyd, 2008). As middle-class Whites continued to flee the city, the Democratic machine maintained its control by allowing de facto social and economic segregation in neighborhoods, schools, jobs, and housing in exchange for the support of working class Whites (Flanagan, 2005; Neckerman, 2007; Boyd, 2008). The mayor and the Democratic machine worked to draw White voters in new ways, and the most popular vehicle for attracting allies became the patronage rewards of economic revitalization projects. The success of those projects became integrally tied to the success and power of the mayor and the machine (Boyd, 2008).

Encouraged by both federal housing programs and the suburbanization of industry, middle-class Whites continued to settle in the suburbs where Blacks not welcome as discussed in chapter 2 (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). The suburbs were almost exclusively White primarily due to the patterns of institutional discrimination against Blacks through the labor market, mortgage lending practices, class and race based redlining, and exclusionary zoning in the suburbs (Massey and Denton, 1993; Ladd, 1998; Street, 2007). Suburban home ownership became a possibility for relocating White Chicagoans because of the increasing availability of federal loan and mortgage programs (FHA, GI Bill) and the prosperity ignited by war-induced recovery (Massey and Denton, 1993; Oliver and Shapiro, 1997; Street, 2007). The mass exodus of Whites to the suburbs and the Supreme Court ruling against restrictive covenants in 1948 meant that Blacks could now venture into other areas of the city (Boyd, 2008). The South Side Black ghetto expanded eastward into the formerly all White neighborhoods of Oakland, Kenwood, and Hyde Park; westward crossing Western Avenue; and south into Englewood, Woodlawn, and Chatham (Street, 2007). Attracted to the city with the promise of manufacturing jobs, Chicago's Black population continued to increase and by 1960 there were 813,000 Black residents in the city (Street, 2007). At the same time, a second ghetto was created on the West Side, as the neighborhoods of North Lawndale, Garfield Park, and Austin were flooded with these new Black arrivals (Street, 2007). Earlier that year, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights called Chicago the most segregated city in the nation, and the NAACP found that 91 percent of the city's public schools reflected the patterns of residential segregation (Street, 2007).

Street (2007) argues that the combination of Black militancy movements, the urban racial violence of the 1960s, and affirmative action policies sparked a costly White backlash against both Blacks and the urban poor. This backlash encouraged White flight from many of the nations

disproportionately Black cities to overwhelmingly disproportionate White suburban enclaves (Massey and Denton, 1993; Oliver and Shapiro, 1997; Street, 2007). The Civil Rights Commission estimated that during 1959, each week, 300 White residents left the city and 600 Black residents arrived (Street, 2007). The suburbanization of industry continued, so when Whites left the city center, their purchasing power went with them. Chicago was home to two-thirds of the regions manufacturing jobs, and the industry employed 30 percent of the Black workforce (Street, 2007). Thus, as noted in chapter two, the decline of the manufacturing industry in Chicago hit Black workers especially hard. Five years after Martin Luther King's failed summer in Chicago, the city lost about 117,000 jobs and Black communities on the South and West sides were economically devastated (Street, 2007; Neckerman, 2007). In fact, the primarily Black South and West sides were the only areas of the city to experience such severe unemployment during the time. Employment actually increased in the city's White neighborhoods after the mass exodus of many Whites, but decreased in the ghetto when hundreds of thousands of Blacks arrived in the city (Street, 2007). The obvious consequence of the massive White flight to the suburbs, just as Blacks arrived to the city in droves, was an increasingly racially and economically segregated Chicago (Cohen & Taylor, 2000; Neckerman, 2007; Street, 2007). Blacks and Latinas/os did not possess an equal opportunity to withdraw from the city and follow jobs or homes. The abandoned poor, largely Black and Latino/a, disproportionately suffered the consequences of a declining job market, an aging housing base, a shrinking tax base, and the steadily increasing gap between the social services needed and those available (Street, 2007).

During the last half of Daley's administration, from 1960-1976, the racism within the local Democratic Party in the areas of housing, education, employment, and the police

department was continually exposed, prompting Black voters to challenge the machine (Boyd, 2008). Examples can be seen in the battle to desegregate the schools, detailed in chapter two, and later efforts to desegregate the city's neighborhoods (Boyd, 2008). In the case of residential segregation, challenges were launched on multiple fronts; the most successful was that of Dorothy Gautreaux and three others who accused the CHA of racial discrimination in the site selection and tenant assignment of the city's public housing facilities. The court's ruling in 1969 agreed with local residents, however the city stalled for five years in an attempt to avoid new site selections, and when compelled to do so it simply stopped building (Boyd, 2008). Even less successful were the protests and boycotts culminating in the anticlimactic negotiations between the mayor, community organizers and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The resulting Summit Agreement was a dog that not only failed to bite, it didn't bark. King left, Daley reportedly received more than four-fifths of the Black vote in his run for a fourth term, and the commitments made during the Summit Agreement negotiations were abandoned. In the battle to desegregate the public schools several community organizations launched a suit against the city. They were supported by several independent reports which recommended that the school system be integrated. Still the mayor voted against integration in response to protests from the city's White residents (Boyd, 2008). By this time, Chicago's mayor had shifted his sights towards landing a new electoral base. As the civil rights movement intensified, he became increasingly suspicious of Blacks, especially middle-class Blacks (Grimshaw, 1992). He believed that revolt would most likely begin in middle-class areas, and his repressive actions reflected his awareness that the Civil Rights Movement was a threat to the machine. And he was correct. Middle-class Black voters had indeed retreated from the machine. Black Belt residents began to understand local conflicts within the national struggle for civil rights. This shift broke the unspoken

agreement between the machine and the Black submachine within the machine—the suppression of issue-based politics. Boyd (2008) argues that this rift ignited the search for alternative options and is responsible for the current use of community-based organizations as a tool for political empowerment. In response to the growing threat of the Civil Rights Movement, Daley attempted to contain the Black community by replacing existing popular civic representatives with those that held no connection to the community. With no ties to residents, he reasoned that the communities they represented could not pressure the newest Black elites. However Daley's containment strategies were unsuccessful. At the time of his death, in 1976, he left his successors with a rising tide of Black discontent. Having been suppressed and denied representation, the Black electorate was ready for revolt (Grimshaw, 1992). The machine withdrew its remaining resources and Blacks withdrew from the machine, launching an attack by running independent candidates in several elections. Although their reign was short lived, they elected three independent aldermen between 1963 and 1967 (Boyd, 2008). There were also signs that there was a decline in the overall electoral participation of low-income African Americans in the city, therefore the base that the mayor relied on no longer provided a significant winning margin for the machine (Grimshaw, 1992).

During the 1970s, the Black population continued to expand and there were more Black aldermen (14) than there had ever been. During their expansion many of the older Black leaders died and Daley immediately removed any Black ward leaders that appeared to even moderately side with community members (Grimshaw, 1992). The death of former leaders and Daley's replacement of others ensured that few remained who would fight for a redistribution of power and privilege. One committeeman, Ralph Metcalf, the first Black elite elevated by Daley, turned against the machine by taking a stand against police brutality. When Black residents rioted after



the assassination of King, the mayor issued a quite infamous ‘shoot to kill’ order to the city’s police force (Grimshaw, 1992). The following year, the state’s attorney Edward V. Hanrahan authorized a raid on Black Panther Party leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark that led to their deaths. Sometime before Hanrahan organized a special gang unit to undermine the activities of the Black Panther Party, and when its leaders were murdered officials claimed self-defense. However subsequent examinations showed that on the night the police arrived, they opened fire without provocation upon the sleeping inhabitants of the home. When one of Metcalf’s top aides was the victim of police brutality, perhaps this was the final straw. He attempted to have disciplinary action taken against the offending officers. When that and his subsequent actions were ignored he broke ranks with the machine, crossed party lines to endorse another candidate for states attorney, and even considered challenging the mayors re-election (Grimshaw, 1992).

It was within this political and economic context that Mayor Daley unveiled the 1973 plan for Chicago. *Time Magazine* published an article detailing the reasoning behind the plan to prepare Chicago for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The primary goal of Chicago 21: A Plan for the Central Area Communities—to attract middle-class suburbanites to the city. The 21,000 White residents ‘lost’ to the suburbs from 1958-1973 required the development of a new plan that would ‘entice’ them to again choose Chicago (*Time Magazine*, 1973). The chances of its success was judged to be excellent at the time because it was endorsed by a group of powerful, local businessmen—including top executives of Sears, Marshall Field, and Standard Oil (Amoco)—and was green lighted by then mayor, Richard J. Daley.

The planners behind *Chicago 21* not only welcomed these residents, they developed a multi-billion dollar strategic plan to actively recruit them. With a budget of one billion dollars a year for the next fifteen years, *Chicago 21* was set to change the city’s housing options, public

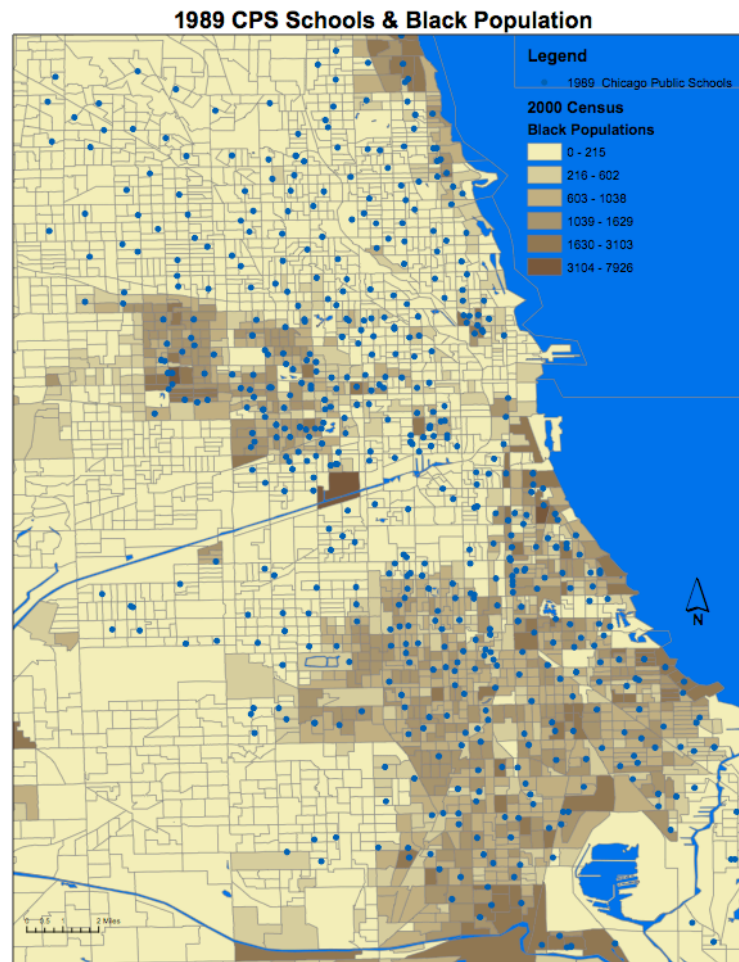
school system, and transportation network simultaneously. What is unique about the 1973 *Chicago 21* plan is its admission that a certain group of residents was more preferable and of more value than others. It was around this point in time that low-income communities and public housing were targeted for what has come to be known as gentrification or revitalization.

### **Ethnicity in Chicago: Community Organizations and Political Empowerment**

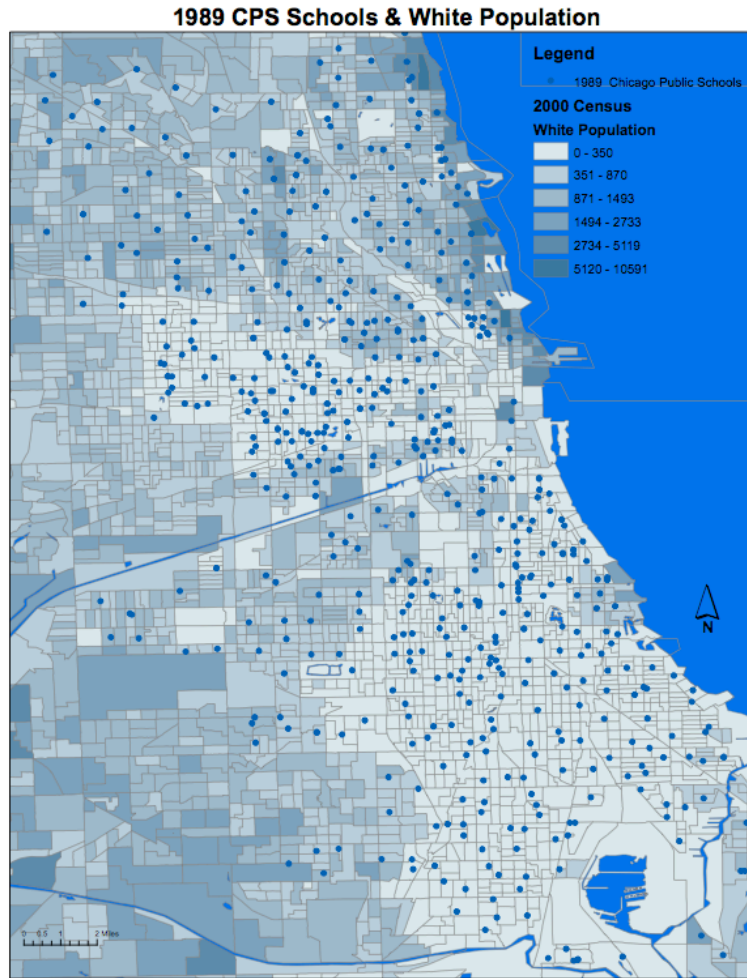
Between 1970 and 1990, Chicago lost about 60 percent of its manufacturing jobs as the deindustrialization of WWII transitioned into the era of economic restructuring and globalization (Street, 2007). Although the Black population initially decreased a bit in the city and rose moderately in the suburbs between 1970 and 1990, the Black population within the city continued to increase along with a large new influx of primarily Mexican Americans (Street, 2007). As discussed earlier the persistent segregation strategies employed by those in the real estate industry, meant that most Blacks and Latinos/as continued to reside to communities that were highly segregated. This hyper-segregation can be seen in Figures 1, 2, and 3. Figure 1 displays the segregated spaces of Black Chicagoans, who continue to be concentrated in large proportions to the far north, west, and far south of the city. In Figure 2 we see the location of White Chicagoans throughout the city. White residents are concentrated to the north of the city as well as to the southwest. Figure 2 also highlights the concentration of Whites on the periphery of the city. Figure 3 displays the location of Latina/o Chicagoans throughout the city. Latinas/os are highly concentrated in the far north and northwest parts of the city, as well as to the central west parts of the city. Together Figures 1 and 3 highlight how large concentrations of Latino/as and large concentrations of Blacks maneuver around one another on the west side of the city.

Although the choropleth maps in Figures 1-3 were created using 2000 Census data, they are supported with data from the University of Chicago's Map Collection, depicted in Figure 4.

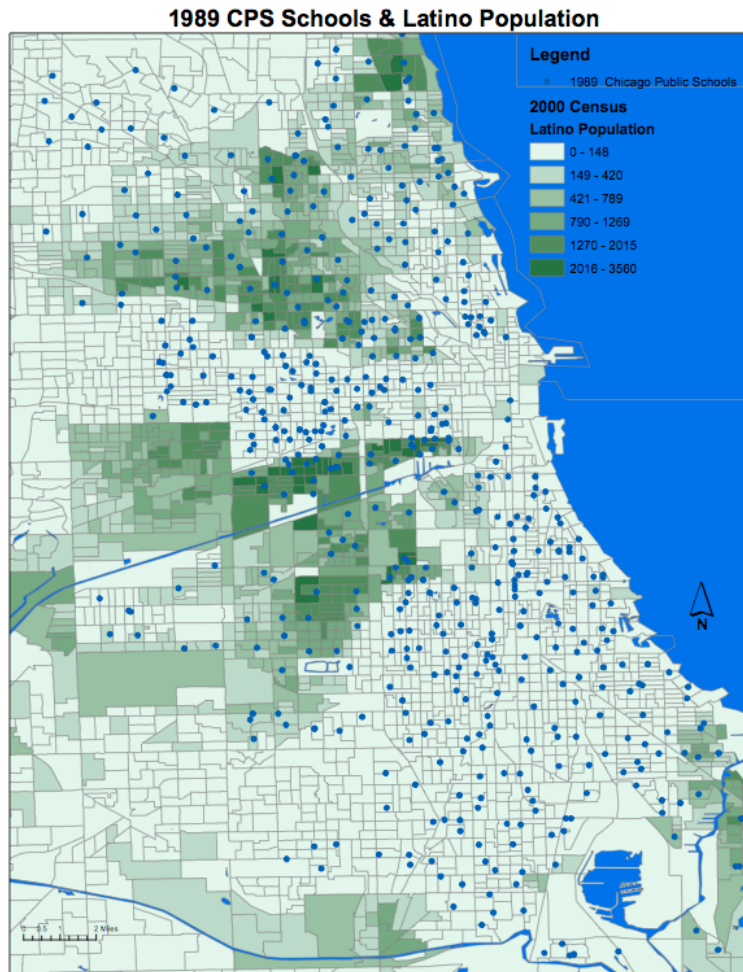
Figure 4 verifies that the location of Blacks and Latinos/as in 2000 is very consistent with the location Blacks and Latinas/os in 1990.



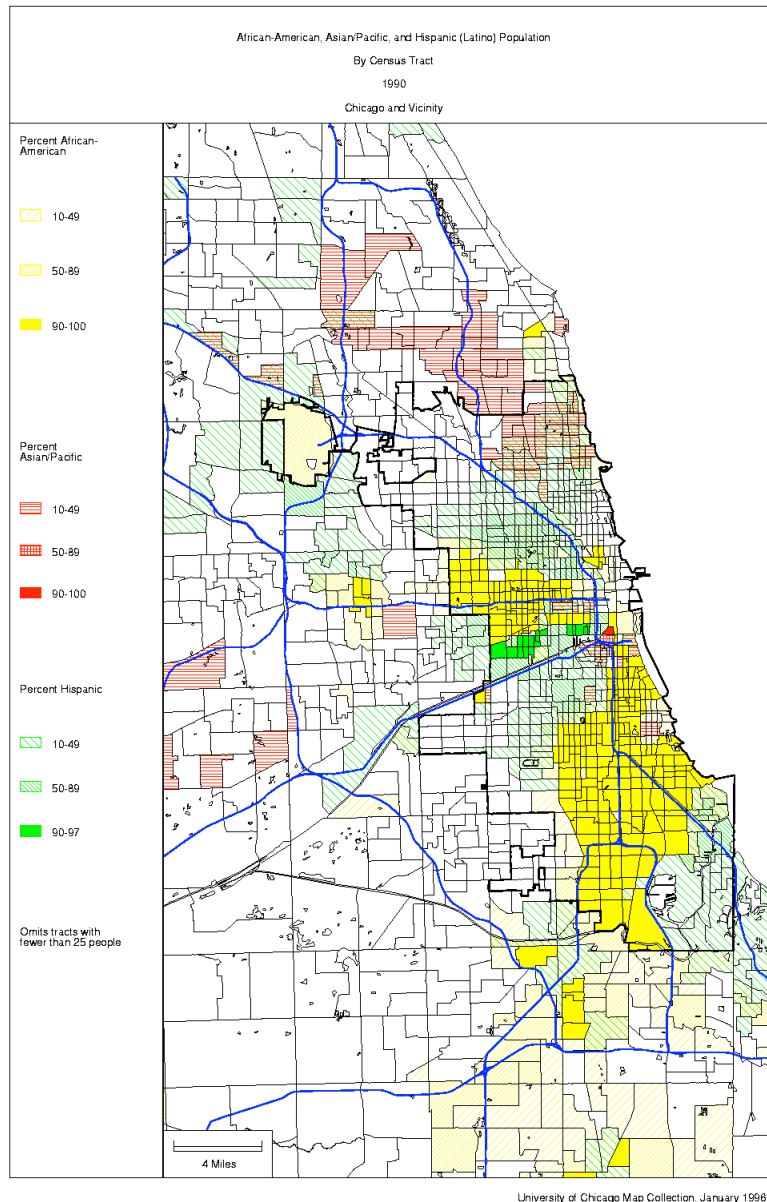
*Figure 1.* Chloropleth map displaying all Chicago Public Schools in 1989 and the location of Black Chicagoans as indicated in the 2000 U.S. Census. The darkest areas indicate the largest concentration of Black populations.



*Figure 2.* Chloropleth map displaying Chicago Public Schools in 1989 and the location of White Chicagoans as indicated in the 2000 U.S. Census. The darkest areas indicate the largest concentrations of White populations.



*Figure 3.* Choropleth map displaying Chicago Public Schools in 1989 and the location of Latina/o Chicagoans as indicated in the 2000 U.S. Census. The darkest areas indicate the largest concentrations of Latina/o populations.



*Figure 4.* African American, Asian American, and Latina/o population by census tract, Chicago 1990. University of Chicago Map Collection.

As employment opportunities faded with social support systems, the poverty of Blacks and Latinos/as increased and the income gap between White families and Black and Latino/a families widened (Street, 2007). By 1989, Blacks were six times more likely to live in poverty than Whites (Street, 2007). Until the 1970s, there was much greater class integration in Black

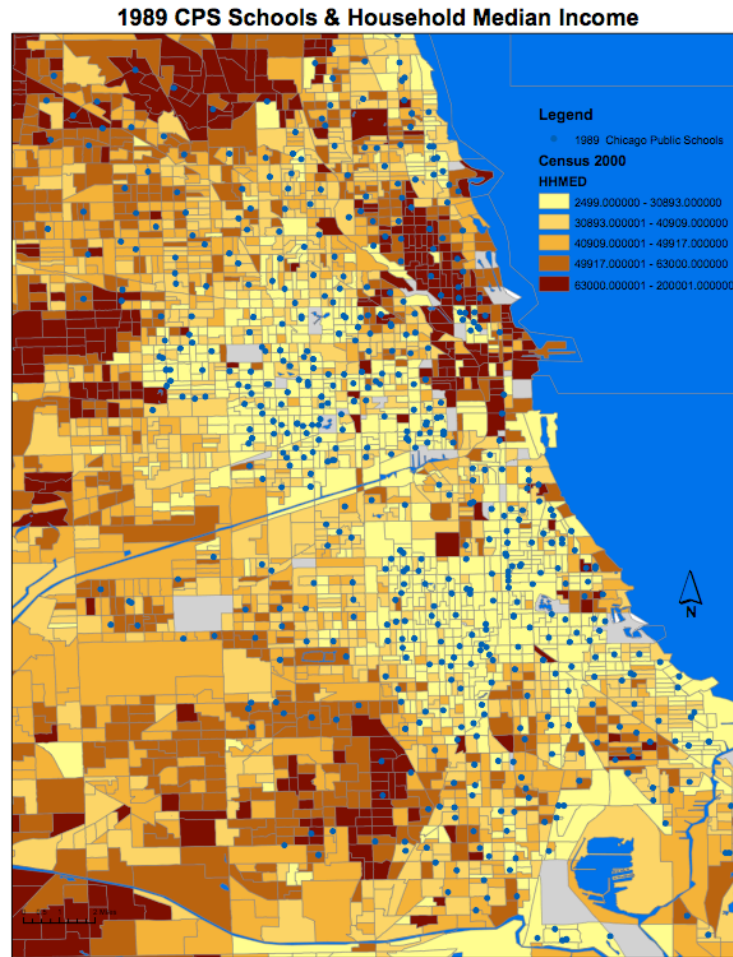
areas of Chicago because residents had a limited ability to join their class within the larger society (Drake and Cayton, 1993; Boyd, 2008). This resulted in Blacks of all classes living in the same communities, attending the same schools and churches, and shopping in the same stores in the inner-city areas of Bronzeville, Douglas, Grand Boulevard and Washington Park (Drake and Cayton, 1993). Both changes in the economy and changes in the class composition have contributed to less stable neighborhoods today than those in the past, and a sharp decline in the social organization of Black communities in inner-city Chicago (Wilson, 1993). It was the complete economic disinvestment within Black neighborhoods that led to an extreme out-migration of working and middle-class Blacks to more stable communities within the city and suburbs. Both Drake and Cayton (1993) and Boyd (2008) complicate the notion of a homogenous 'Black community' throughout their study, detailing the many economic, class, and intraracial conflicts between residents of the Black Belt. However, the popular narrative is unattached to wide-spread disinvestment and the deterioration of inner-city neighborhoods has most times been attributed to the 'loss' of the middle-class. Of course, the loss of middle and higher income Blacks held political implications for residents within the Black Belt because historically the economic and political survival of poor Blacks was intricately dependent upon their proximity to elites that were well connected (Grimshaw, 1992; Boyd, 2008). In the late 1960s during the Dawson-Daley machine, although Blacks had the opportunity to secure 28% of the crucial political posts, the 'powerlessness' Urban League report released that year revealed the insignificance of their share of power (Drake and Cayton, 1993). Although they were largely loyal to the Democratic machine, Blacks held no real political power to affect their lives. For example, although Blacks represented more than 25% of the electorate, out of the city's fifty-nine committeemen, seven were Black. There was one Black congressman out of thirteen, and of

Cook County's judicial policy making posts Blacks held 8 of the 137, or 6 percent. And finally, of the Board of Education's policy-making positions, Blacks held 7 of the 72 posts, or 9 percent.

Additionally, the loss of Blacks with higher incomes combined with the rapidly increasing (and prolonged) unemployment rates lead to the decline of neighborhood institutions like banks, restaurants and professional services (Wilson, 1993). Even churches and community groups experienced dwindling numbers of participants and the decline of both informal and formal networks did little to maintain neighborhood stability (Wilson, 1993). The result was what we now recognize as a ghetto, believed to result from the natural concentration of the poor, but what is truly the result of an area lacking the capability to provide inhabitants with basic opportunities and resources (Wilson, 1993). So along with the departing jobs and businesses, those remaining in distressed communities experienced a different and more extreme form of concentrated poverty. It is important to differentiate between the inner-city of the mid-twentieth century and the inner-city of today (Wilson, 1993).

This extreme concentration of poverty can be seen in Figure 5, which highlights the large concentration of low-income residents located in areas that are primarily Black and Latino/a. Figure 5 reveals the location of 1989 Chicago Public Schools and the household median income for Chicagoans by Census block groups. The wealthiest Chicagoans, defined conservatively as those with household median incomes of \$63,000 and above, are largely concentrated in the north and northeast parts of Chicago. Still smaller concentrations of those with a household median income of \$63,000 and above are located sparingly around the city. Together Figures 1-5 indicate that the majority of low-income residents, those with a household median income between \$2,499 and \$30,893, are in neighborhoods comprised primarily of Black and Latina/o populations.





*Figure 5.* Chloropleth map displaying Chicago Public Schools in 1989 and the household median income of Chicagoans as indicated in the 2000 U.S. Census. The darkest areas indicate the largest concentrations of those with household median incomes of \$63,000 and above, and the lightest areas of the map indicate the largest concentrations of those with household median incomes of \$30,000 and below.

After working together for the betterment of public education from the 1960s to the 1980s, the coalition between Blacks and Latino/as crystallized in the election of mayor Harold Washington in 1983 (Lipman, 2004; Cortez, 2008). Latinas/os and Blacks united over their dislike of mayor Jane Byrne who, in an attempt to wrench the White ethnic vote from Richard M. Daley, began attacking any semblance of power held by the Black and Latina/o residents that elected her. Although Black residents used the majority of services, Byrne significantly reduced the number of Black representation in both public housing and public school leadership. The

final straw for both groups was the mayor's later attempt to remap Chicago's wards to eliminate three Black-majority wards and four Latino/a-majority wards (Grimshaw, 1992). Byrne's strategy was critically flawed and only succeeded in galvanizing a new coalition of Blacks, Latinas/os, and lakefront liberals—each motivated to elect new representation. In addition to the devastating impact of Reaganomics, Byrne's defeat by Washington was very much connected to the sense of disempowerment that she engendered amongst her Black and Latina/o constituents (Grimshaw, 1992). Voters were angry and the turnout for Washington was large.

Washington had spent years in the machine during the Daley administration, and was convinced that the Black community would have to challenge the machine in order to attain any benefits from it (Grimshaw, 1992). However his reforms did not only benefit the Black community. Caste in a language of the "haves" versus the "have-nots", Washington's administration established several new commissions that enabled women, Latinos/as, gays, lesbians, Asians and others to create their own agenda (Grimshaw, 1992). Community cooperation was so fundamental to his agenda that on his first day in office Washington announced the institution of the Freedom of Information Act. He later expanded the act to include the Affirmative Information Policy, where data was collected specifically for community organizations, in response which their limited data gathering capacity (Boyd, 2008).

His administration supported a balanced growth between the downtown area and the neighborhood, community organizations, and neighborhood initiated economic development plans. Washington's inclusion of the public and an open city government were in complete contrast to the Daley administration's reliance on the city's corporate network (Lipman, 2004; Cortez, 2008). He encouraged public participation in the city's economic development plans, and made the city budget hearings public (Boyd, 2008). When he finally gained control of the

budgeting process from a resistant city council, he implemented the Chicago Works program, which resulted in \$1 million improvements to the infrastructure of the Second Ward (Boyd, 2008). Latino/a and Black leaders capitalized on the openness of the Washington administration. By his death in 1987, there were four Latino aldermen, a Mayor's Commission on Latino/a Affairs, and an increase in the percentage of Latino/a city employees (Dominguez, 2007; Cortez, 2008). Blacks also swept into office under Washington, and by 1987 over 80 percent of the Black aldermen elected built their political careers outside of the machine (Grimshaw, 1992).

Unfortunately, his death exposed the limitations of his reforms, which were more personalized than institutionalized. Repeals were immediately implemented (Grimshaw, 1992). Immediately following his election the junior Daley, Richard M., revealed a 'rainbow cabinet' with appointments of twelve Black, Latino/a and Asian commissioners. The appointments proved to be largely superficial after both (a) allegations that commissioners held little influence and discretion and (b) a smaller inner circle of Daley's top aides began to shape much of the administrations policy (Grimshaw, 1992). Many of the commissions created during the Washington administration were stripped of their power and consolidated, and top officials either resigned or were fired whenever opposing views were expressed (Grimshaw, 1992). But before Chicago's current mayor was elected there were two Black contenders for mayor, alderman Eugene Sawyer and alderman Timothy Evans. The senior Daley appointed both aldermen because they lacked both major political ambition and the talents to acquire them, and both failed to generate any support beyond small followings within Black wards. Furthermore their refusal to work together against Richard J. Daley's son, Richard M., ensured the installment of the latter in the next election (Grimshaw, 1992). Washington's sudden death also resulted in the

deterioration of the alliance between Blacks, Latinos/as, and progressive Whites (Lipman, 2004; Dominguez, 2007).

Although just as concentrated within Chicago as Black populations, there is some debate of whether Latinas/os reside in some of the segregated spaces or ‘ethnic enclaves’ that exist within Chicago’s seventy-seven official communities (Betancur, 2002; Dominguez, 2007). There is no such debate between those who study segregated Black neighborhoods—and even nationally, Chicago ranks as the fifth most segregated metropolitan area for Blacks (Street, 2007). Street (2007) emphasizes, “...Blacks are considerably more impoverished, unemployed, and otherwise removed from local and regional labor markets than the city’s rising Latino/a populace—this despite Blacks’ much longer large-scale presence in and around Chicago, [and] their considerably higher rates of education and English-language usage...” (p.194).

In Chicago, the debates surrounding Latinas/os is conceptualized as something that transpires primarily between Mexicans on the Near Southwest Side and Puerto Ricans on the historic Near North Side (Green, 2005; Dominguez, 2007; Cortez, 2008). From 1990 to 2000, Latino/a populations continued to grow making the Little Village/South Lawndale community one of the largest and most densely populated collection of Mexican descendants in the United States—it is second to Los Angeles. Although their numbers swelled in 2000 to surpass Blacks as the largest minority group, the absolute size of the Latino/a population did not automatically translate into sudden political empowerment or success (Dominguez, 2007). Large numbers of mostly Puerto Rican and Black residents between the late 1950s and early 1970s were removed from the Near North neighborhoods like Lincoln Park under the guise of urban renewal (Betancur, 2002). More importantly, community organizations and residents actively resisted the gentrification of West Town, proposing alternative plans. However their plans were quickly

dismissed and each was unable to stop White emigration or city disinvestment (Betancur, 2002). By 1980 Latina/os represented the second largest minority group in Chicago, and 14% of the population, but the groups political position remained minimal. Still, the awareness of an emerging Latino/a community, connected by a similar struggle, pushed community leaders to continue to make demands in the interests of the heterogeneous Latino/a community (Cortez, 2008). As Latinos/as numbers increased, so did the strength of the Latina/o grassroots efforts, many of which were targeted at improving the educational opportunities of Latino/a students (Cortez, 2008).

Chicago is unique in that it may be the only large American city that employs a top-to-bottom centralized Democratic Party organization. This greatly empowers elected officials to a larger degree than in cities without this kind of political monopoly (Dominguez, 2007). Chicago has served as the national model for education reforms for more than a decade, but even before Richard M. Daley (1989-) was given control of the public schools, Chicago was one of a few cities that had never had a publicly elected school board. Thus, because the Democratic Party governs most (if not all) facets of government, Chicago's political system encourages groups to be highly strategic and cohesive in their mobilization efforts (Dominguez, 2007).

The end of the Washington coalition was marked by a shift in the political alliances between Blacks and Latino/as. Dominguez (2007) notes that politically, the relationship between Blacks and Latino/as suggests that as political success increases, competition for limited resources can be triggered. He argues that the decision to abandon the Black-Latino/a coalition was the turning point in the machines ability to recruit Latino/a voters. Chicago's two largest Latino/a political networks, the Independent Political Organization (IPO) and the United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), began as grassroots organizations (Dominguez, 2007;

Cortez, 2008). Although sometimes at odds, working together or working separately, UNO and IPO affiliates solidified the Latino/a electorate. Disillusioned with the emerging political competition between Blacks and Latino/as over matters of inclusion and representation, some Latino/as aligned themselves with mayoral hopeful Richard M. Daley and the Democratic machine (Dominguez, 2007). Dominguez (2007) writes, “...the Daley-Latino/a alliance will only continue to grow at the expense of Blacks” (p. 113). However, the work of Cortez (2008) complicates the pro-Daley Latino/a sentiment with narratives from community members who question the commitment of Latino/a Daley supporters to fight for the interests of the majority of low-income Latino/as.

Despite this debate, the Latino/a electorate has been able to achieve some degree of political representation. In 1988, the electorate fought to provide non-citizens with the right to vote and serve on Local School Councils (Dominguez, 2007; Cortez, 2008). Daley established the Hispanic Democratic Organization (HDO), which elevated the political visibility of Mexican-Americans, and catered specifically to working class Latino/as (Dominguez, 2007; Cortez, 2008). Upon his election Daley pledged that his administration would be defined by classical economizing reforms that make the government more efficient and businesslike (Grimshaw, 1992). Materially this meant cutting back on the city’s workforce by privatizing government services using the language of productivity. Therefore his network with Danny Solis, a powerful Latino/a businessman, was very much in line with his platform. In 1989, Solis, the former executive director of UNO, met with mayor Daley and gained the support of the city’s administration (Cortez, 2008). As a political insider, Solis began to represent Latino/a interests during the city’s major negotiations, which led to an increase in the projects set aside for Mexican communities (Cortez, 2008). In collaboration with other organizations, UNO worked to

double the employment of Latino/as at the University of Illinois campus, inking a deal worth \$75 million to the Latino/a community (Cortez, 2008). And by 1998, UNO opened its first charter school, Octavio Paz. Finally, in same year that Renaissance 2010 was announced, the UNO charter school network was established to partner with CPS and build more charters in Latino/a communities (Cortez, 2008).

Collectively the political representation of Latino/as has increased. Still, class dynamics divide the IPO affiliates and the UNO political network. Both groups couldn't be further apart: IPO affiliates work closely with community members, while UNO works closely with city administrators (Cortez, 2008). "Outsider" Latino/a community members resent being excluded from the decision making process in schools (Cortez, 2008). The most notable example of the political feud is revealed in the struggle for the Little Village neighborhood school. In 1998, a group of parents and the alderman of the 22<sup>nd</sup> ward, Ricardo Munoz, successfully attained \$30 million dollars from the state to build a new high school in the Little Village community (for students living in the community) (Cortez, 2008). The neighborhood's only high school, Farragut Academy, was severely overcrowded and focused on trade and skill development (Lipman, 2007). Three years later, after the construction of two high schools apart of the same initiative, Little Village parents organized to apply political pressure to CPS administrators and city officials (Cortez, 2008). Their 19-day hunger strike is an example of the political empowerment of the Mexican community in Little Village (Lipman, 2007). Cortez (2008) asserts, the 2001 hunger strike was not only the struggle for a new neighborhood school, but the fight to publicly voice concerns and participate in public school policy debates. When the Little Village Lawndale High School opened its doors in 2005, community members had helped to shape everything from the physical design of the building to the curriculum taught in its classrooms (Cortez, 2008). The

facility housed four separate college preparatory schools to specifically serve the Mexican-American community of Little Village and its nearby African American community in North Lawndale (Lipman, 2007).

The construction of the Little Village High School is significant because up until that point, all new high schools had been charter or selective enrollment schools. It is also an example of interest convergence and should be understood not only as community resistance and political representation but within the context of the negative national attention the city received because of the hunger strike. This, like the threat of violence when Black residents and Dr. King were finally permitted to meet with the senior Daley, is why CPS officials agreed to finally meet with Little Village residents. Where Renaissance 2010 is concerned, the major difference in the experiences between low-income Blacks and low-income Latinos/as is in part due to (a) massive increases in the Latino/a population, (b) the political mobilization of that population, and (c) the converging interests between the city's new Latino/a elite business community and the agenda of the machine. It could also be argued that the continued grassroots political empowerment of low-income Latino/as, combined with a strained relationship with Latino/a committeemen and machine representatives, has currently shielded their neighborhood schools from experiencing Ren10 school closings like communities on the South Side (Figure 13). Yet more than likely, the closing of schools that are first located in primarily Black neighborhoods reflects both: (a) the economic and real estate development near the Loop; and I theorize (b) the strategic move on the part of the city to avoid encouraging multiethnic coalitions.



## Alternative Stories of Renaissance 2010

*The community doesn't want a charter school. We want a public school.*  
--Altgeld resident and parent of Fenger student, December School Board meeting

*A day in Fenger for me is like stepping into a battle ground, I have to watch my back. Every passing period, I'm paranoid because I don't know if I'm going to get jumped on. We need a neighborhood school so we can have safe passage, and don't have to worry.*  
--Fenger High School student, December School Board meeting

*Quality education is a right, not a choice.*  
--Community member at Democratic Alternatives to Ren10 Workshop, 1/9/10

The tale of Renaissance 2010 is interestingly the intersection of two competing stories: that of the Chicago's current administration, and that of residents of color that are most likely to be Black or Latino/a. The city aligns itself with the corporate philosophy of accountability, standardization and data driven actions. In the CPS system this takes the form of an aggressive commitment to attracting middle-class and affluent families to the city center. The importance of schools to the economy was demonstrated when the mayor relocated the schools central administration from buildings on the South Side to the newly renovated building in the Loop, near both city hall and the Chicago Stock Exchange (Shipps, 2009). Prior to both the 1988 and 1995 reforms, the school board (although appointed) was a legislative body that voted publicly, debated issues, and developed factions. After the 1995 reforms, there was a shift to a 'corporate-style' school board that, like the city council, now serves a pro forma function (Shipps, 2009). Although residents are allowed to address the board in two-minute increments, both the deliberation and voting process are now closed to the public.

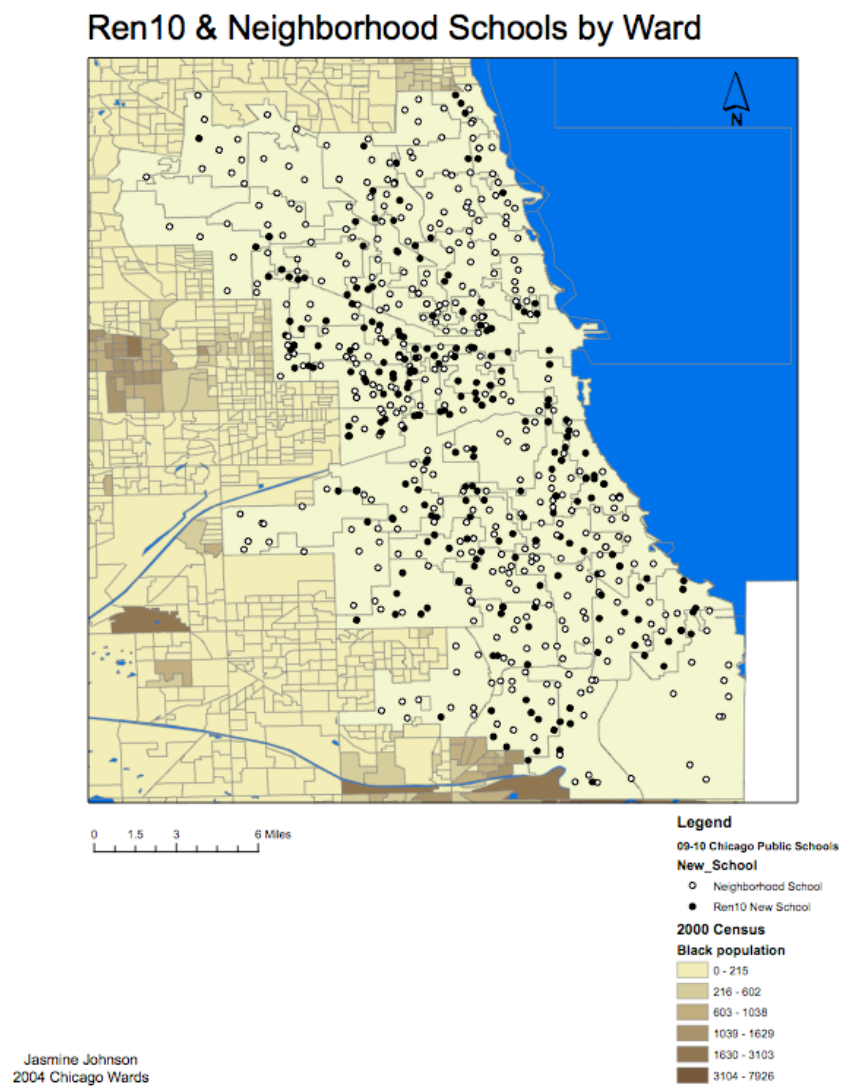
The current efforts to recruit the middle-class usually negatively affect the large majority of preexisting Black (34.6%) and Latino/a (27.8%) residents who are less concerned with recruiting the affluent. Instead Black and Latino/a community members are more likely to champion efforts that seek to improve the living conditions in their current neighborhoods and

increase the resources to those neighborhoods. Most importantly, support for said improvements is found when the end goal is a positive contribution to the lives of those *currently* residing in those neighborhoods. Therefore, in practice there is a cosmic disconnection between the values of Chicago's policymakers and the majority of Chicago residents. With this knowledge, it is not surprising when the policies implemented by city leaders are met with resistance from community members, community organizations and some of their elected officials.

The Daley administration touts Renaissance 2010 as a policy that creates choice and offers both accountability and transparency. Community members reject this analysis, insisting that through the Ren10 policy, city administrators appropriate schools and neighborhoods. And, under the guise of accountability CPS officials and city administrators blame students, parents, and teachers for 'failing' schools, strictly for the purpose of privatizing the public school system. One of the later goals of this project was to understand why. On its face, Ren10 looks like a policy that provides new schools to Chicago's most traditionally underserved communities. CPS officials say that they are committed to improving the academic achievement of Chicago's students by carefully monitoring the standardized test scores of the city's lowest performing schools. The Board of Education reacts swiftly to rid the Chicago system of failing teachers, administrators, and deteriorating school facilities.

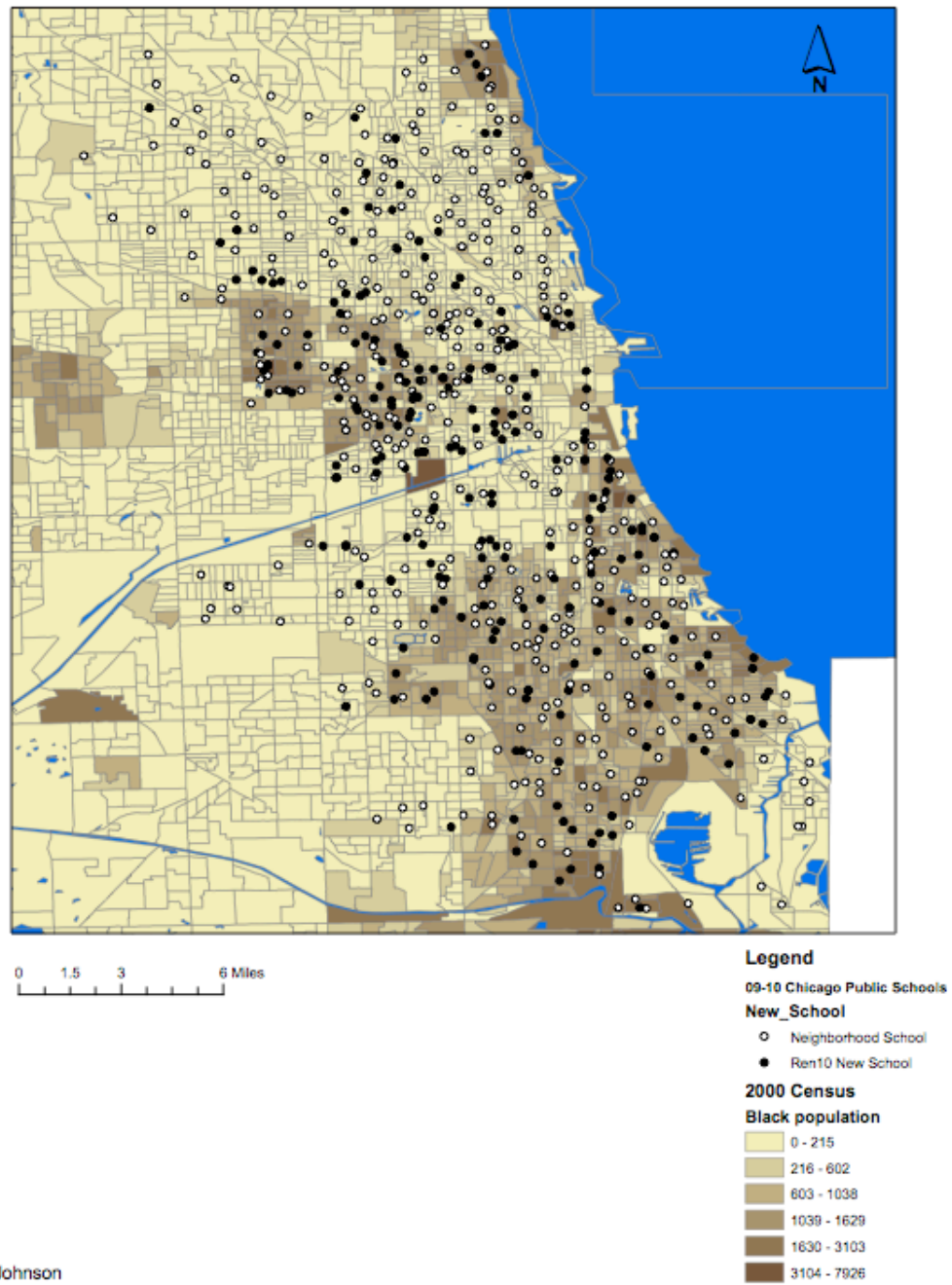
One of the contributions of this project is snapshots of Ren10 at work, and what the policy looks like across Chicago's many communities. Figure 6 provides a look at Ren10 schools by ward. Most of the Ren10 new schools are located on the South and West Sides of the city. Figures 7-9 reveal that the residents on the South and West Sides are primarily Blacks and Latino/a. Figure 10 provides the location and concentration of Chicago's renting population. From these snapshots it is clear that the majority of Ren10 schools are located on the South and

West Sides of Chicago, in neighborhoods consisting of large concentrations of low-income Blacks and low-income Latino/as who rent. With special attention Figure 10, we can see that in the gentrifying communities on the South and West sides, the majority of residents are not property owners. This is important, because renters (non-property owners) are mobile (can be moved). As we see in Figure 11, from 1990-2000 there is much movement within these areas.



*Figure 6. Renaissance 2010 Schools & Neighborhood Schools by Ward, Chicago.*

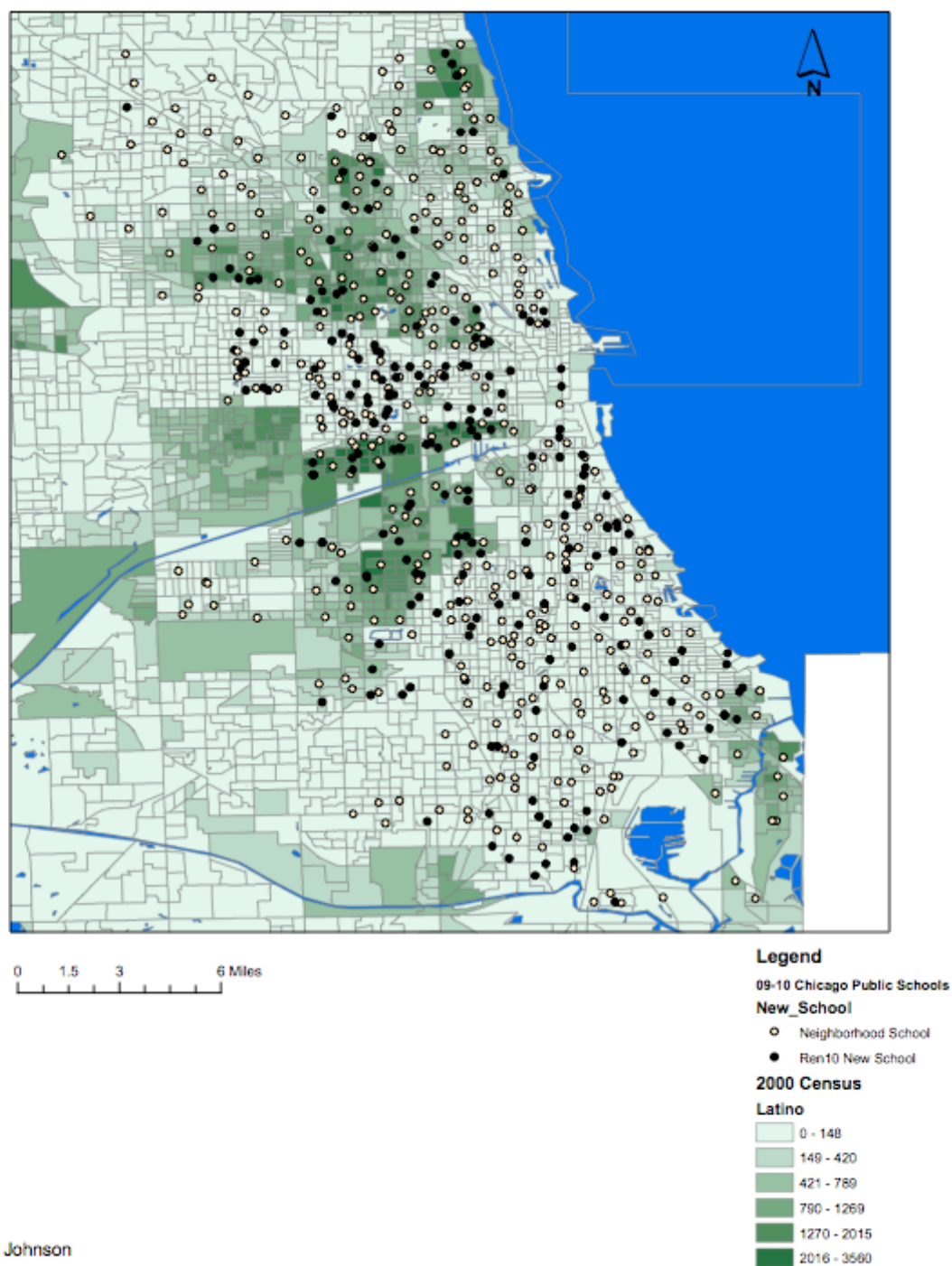
## CPS 2010: Renaissance 2010 New Schools



Jasmine Johnson

*Figure 7.* Chloropleth map of Ren10 Schools & Neighborhood Schools by Black population.

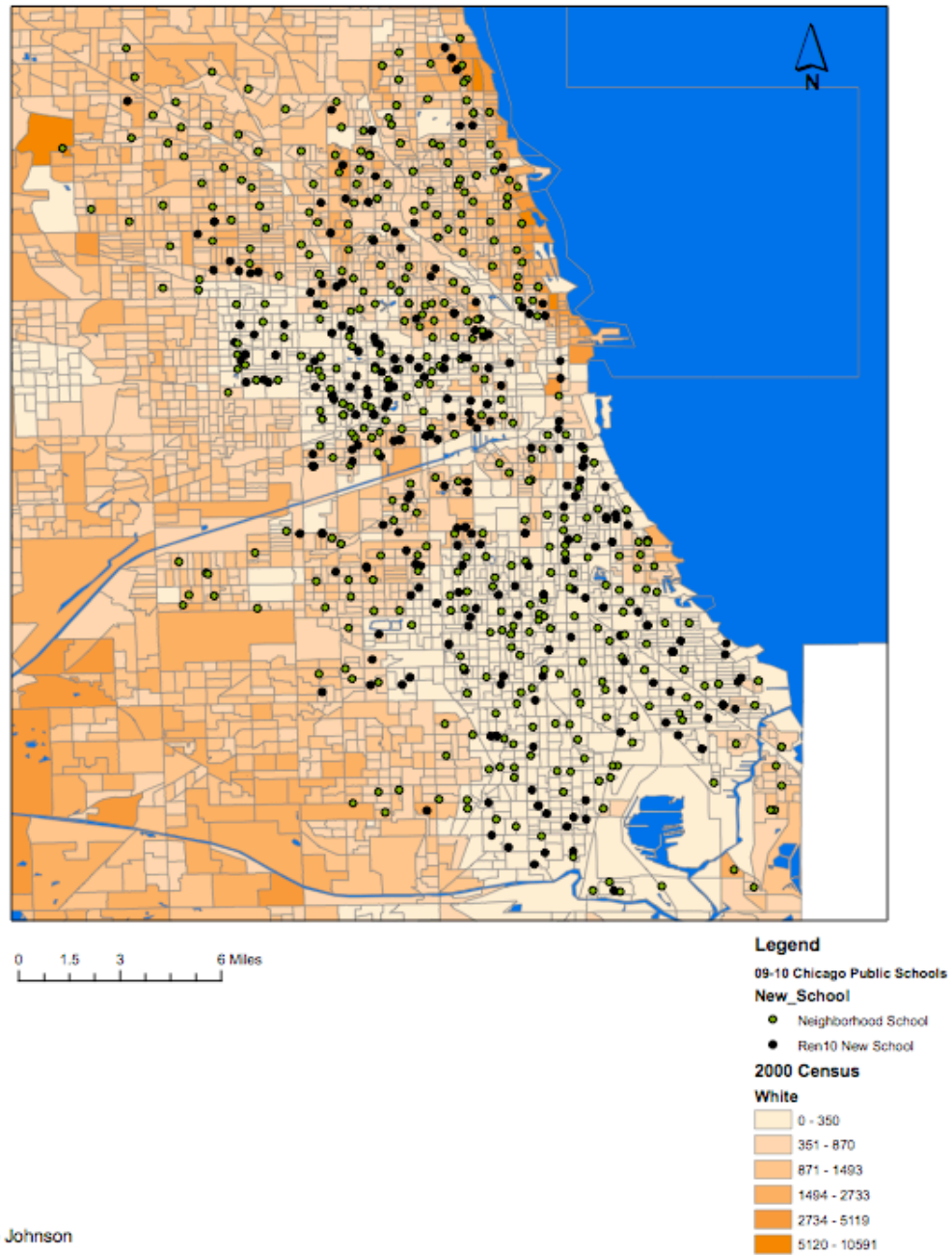
## Latino Population: Ren10 & Neighborhood Schools, 2010



Jasmine Johnson

Figure 8. Chloropleth map of Ren10 Schools, Neighborhood Schools, and Latina/o population.

## White Population: Ren10 & Neighborhood Schools, 2010



Jasmine Johnson

Figure 9. Chloropleth map of Ren10 schools, Neighborhood schools, and White population.



## Renting Chicagoans: Ren10 & Neighborhood Schools, 2010

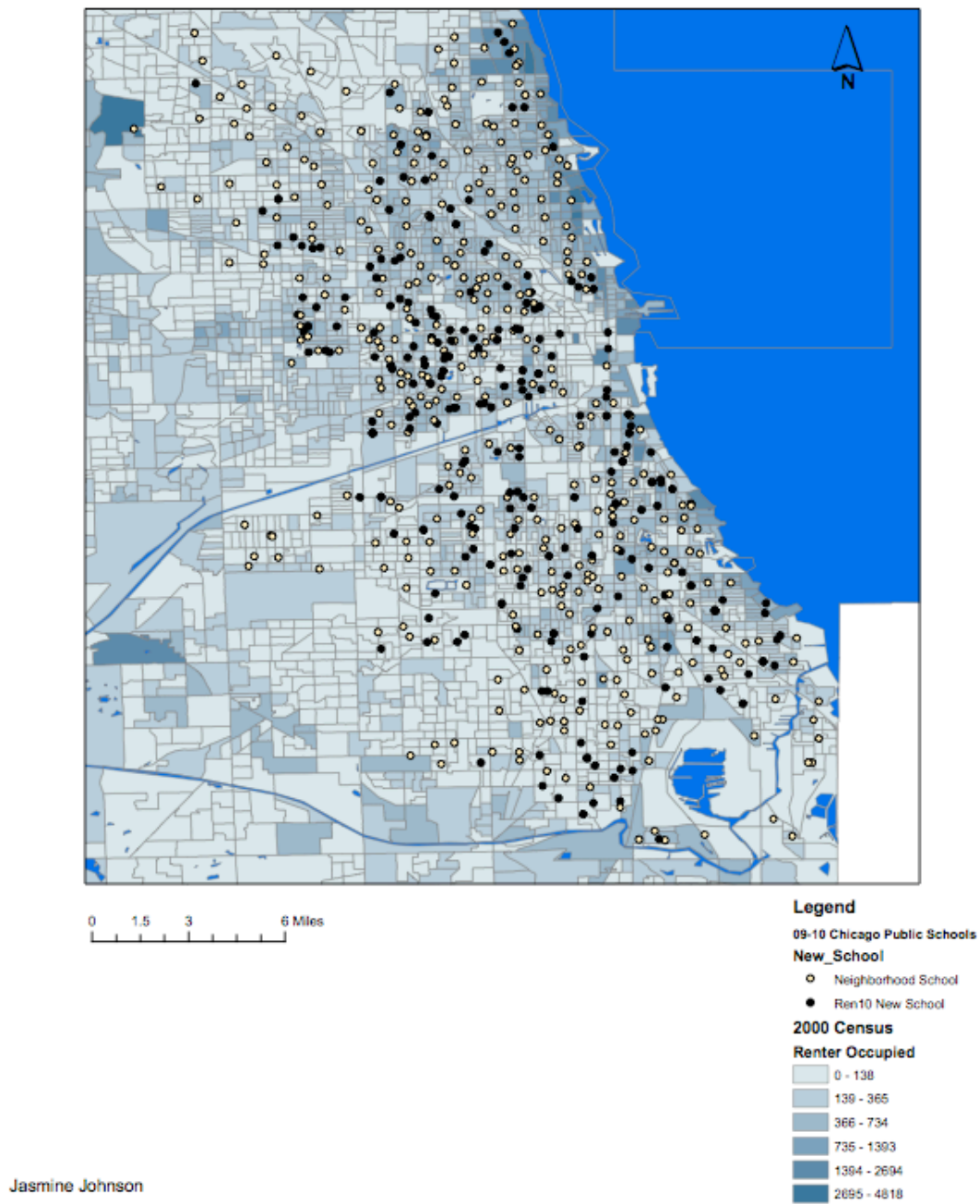
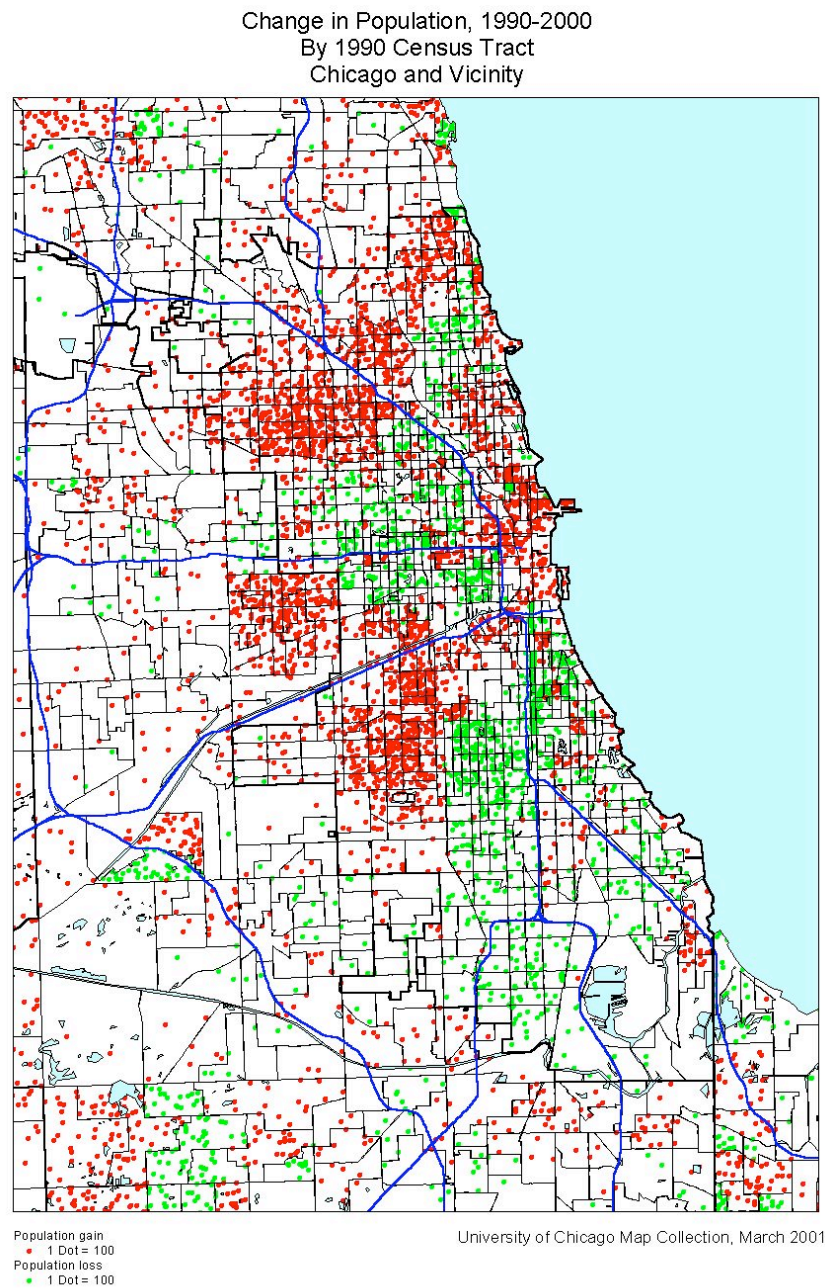


Figure 10. Choropleth map of Ren10 schools and Neighborhood schools by renting population.



*Figure 11.* Change in population, 1990-2000. University of Chicago Map Collection 2001.



In part, the population shifts occurring on the South and West Sides of Chicago can be explained by changes to the public housing policy at both federal and local levels. Under a neoliberal regime, policy that emphasizes privatization, private market deregulation, and the mobility of goods and services are favored (Ranney, 2003). This mode of thought has substantially affected housing policy in three ways that disproportionately affect the poor and determine where they can live. First, government programs largely focus on the privatization of public services, which has resulted in severe cutbacks on publicly owned housing. Secondly, the emphasis on individual competitiveness in the housing market and the value of individual home ownership has relieved local government of the risks associated with maintaining an adequate supply of affordable housing. And finally, the expansion of credit and speculation favors developers, the wealthy, and middle-class families over the poor (Ranney, 2003).

These political and ideological shifts have severe consequences for Chicago's low-income residents. Most notably, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)—established to administer the public housing in Chicago—rewrote its mission statement in 2003. The original statement, written in 1937, read as follows: “to build and operate public housing...for persons whose incomes are insufficient to enable them to obtain decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings in the private market” (Ranney, p. 130). In 1999 the purpose read, “The role of the CHA is to invest in or facilitate housing opportunities. Particularly, with the new freedoms made possible by recent legislation, the agency should no longer view itself as primarily an owner or manager of public housing” (Ranney, p. 130). As I write this, the CHA website states, “CHA now focuses on its primary responsibility as an asset manager and contracts with private professional property management firms to manage properties” (CHA Press Release, 2010).

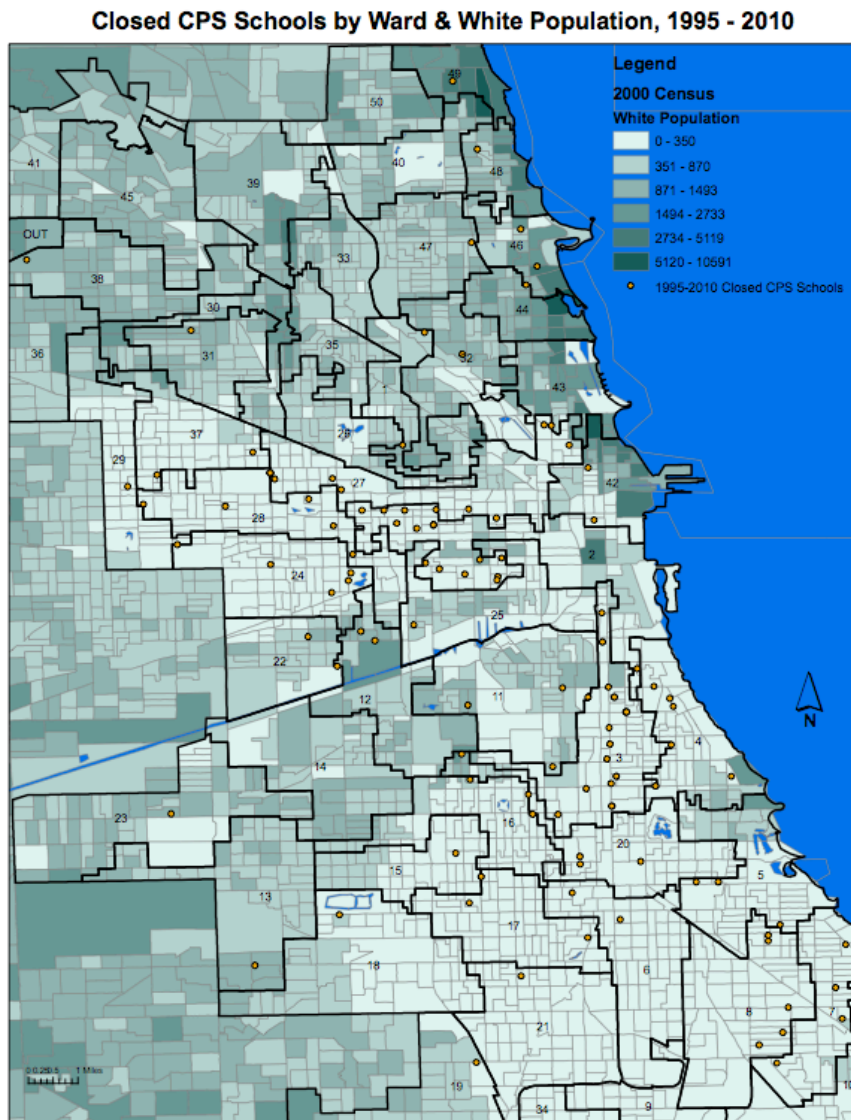
The Clinton administration's Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 was created to decrease concentrations of poverty in public housing and create mixed income communities. Daley's close relationship with the Clinton administration helped to facilitate federal grants for his gentrification projects as his corporate partners lobbied for additional dollars from the state legislature (Shipps, 2009). The result of income targeting in Chicago has been problematic because there is insufficient housing for poor people with incomes less than the new requirements allow (Ranney, 2003). Additionally, the one-for-one replacement law (which prohibited public housing authorities from demolishing any units that would not be replaced) was suspended in 1996 and removed entirely by 1998 (Ranney, 2003). Currently public housing authorities can remove units if they are not cost-effective to operate or if they are considered obsolete (Ranney, 2003). As a result the CHA has replaced all but three of its large public housing facilities with smaller mixed-income communities (CHA Press Release, 2010). Many critics of the new agenda have expressed concerns that the smaller mixed-income communities are unable to serve the large amount of displaced residents from the high-rise public housing facilities built in the 1950s and 1960s (Ranney, 2003). Those residents were primarily Black because the South Side of Chicago was the area designated for the public housing developments that would contain Blacks. Changes to the national public housing policy and its local application contribute to explanations of the decrease in the Black population from 1990-2000 on the South and West Sides.

### **Erasing the Community: Ren10 and Neighborhood School Closure**

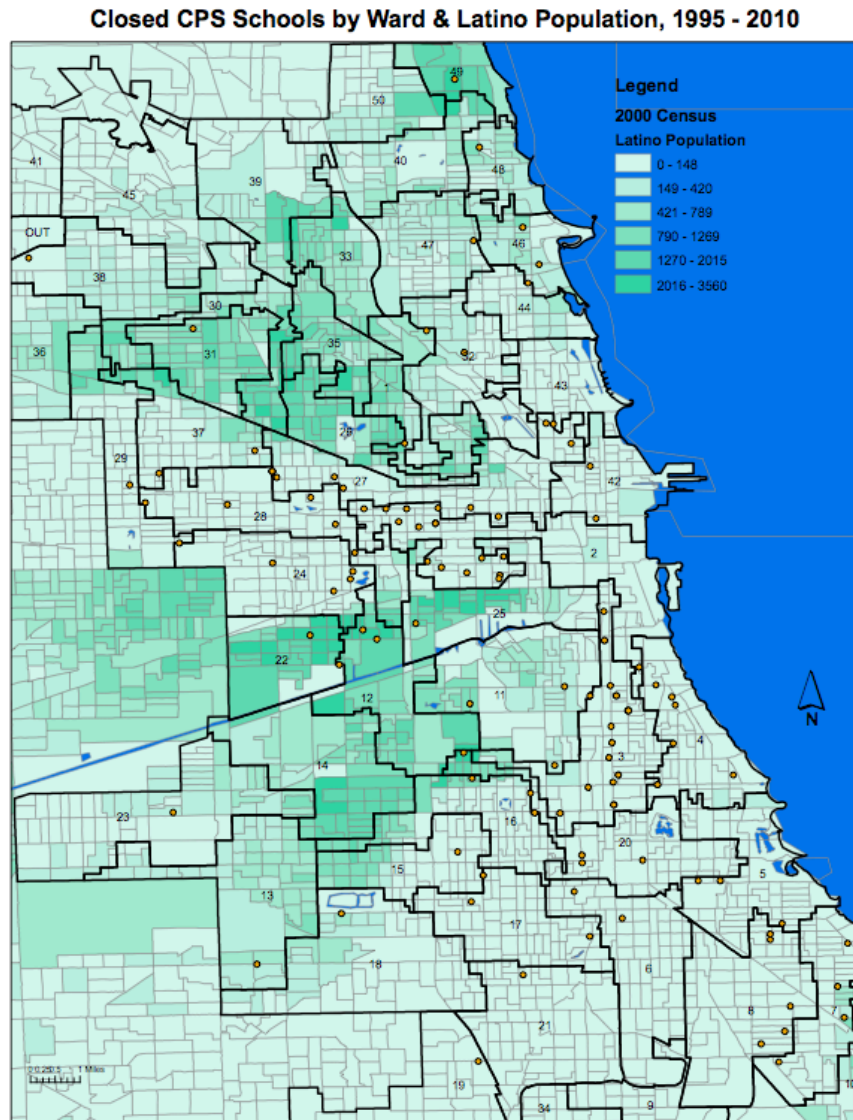
Neighborhood schools have traditional neighborhood attendance boundaries—so students that attend the local public school traditionally live within the neighborhood's boundaries. Given the large decline in populations on the South and West sides, from 1990-2000, and reports that this

trend continues, it seems likely that neighborhood school closures would largely occur in areas experiencing a decrease in population. From 1995 to 2010 this appears to be the case (See Figures 12, 13, 14). School closings are located primarily on the South and West Sides, within communities that experienced a population decline. Between 1990 and 2000 areas with traditionally large concentrations of Whites and Latinos/as have experienced a population increase (See Figure 11). Whites are largely on the North and periphery of the city, and schools have been primarily closed on the South and West Sides. A University of Chicago report (2007) estimates that the population trends expressed in Figure 11 have continued into 2010 with White and Latino/a populations experiencing growth in the city, and Black populations experiencing a decrease in population (Goerge, Dilts, Yang, Wasserman, & Clary, 2007). Therefore, Figure 12 and Figure 13 are consistent with we would expect—few Ren10 school closings in areas with increasing populations.

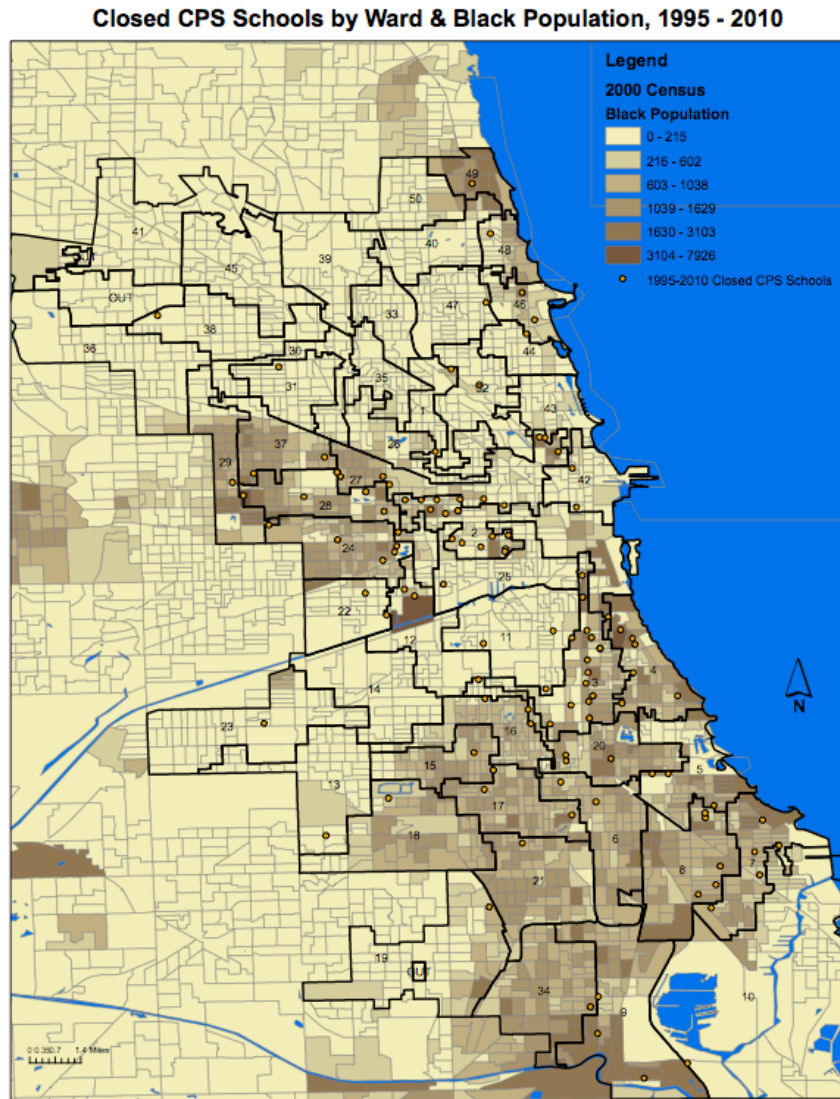
The literature suggests that the small number of closed Ren10 schools in Latino/a communities can be explained in part by the political empowerment of the group and the effectiveness of the Latino/a electorate and grassroots organizations to protect many of their neighborhood schools (Dominguez, 2007; Cortez, 2008). And with an increasing political representation, through struggle, Chicago's Latina/o population has in large part been able to avoid the loss of neighborhood schools in their communities. In Figure 13, it is important to note that some of the closed schools in have a large concentration of Blacks. For example, the two schools closed in Ward 12 are located in areas with high concentrations of Blacks. With this in mind the total of school closings in primarily Latino/a neighborhoods changes from around ten schools to around seven, and schools that have closed share their boundaries with large concentrations of low-income Blacks.



*Figure 12.* Chloropleth map of Closed Ren10 schools and White population, 1995-2010.



*Figure 13.* Chloropleth map featuring Ren10 closed schools and Latino/a population, 1995-2010.



*Figure 14.* Choropleth map of Black residents and Ren10 closed schools, 1995-2010.

Closed schools overwhelmingly occur in wards with declining Black populations on the South and West Sides. The majority of school closings are also heavily concentrated in Wards 2 (15 closings), 3 (14 closings) and 4 (6 closings), which are closest to the Loop and Lake Michigan. Combined, these wards have lost a total of 35 schools. Each ward is in close proximity to the lakefront, the museum, and the Loop. So while this area is undergoing a massive depopulation process, as a result of the decreasing availability of affordable homes, the area is

currently experiencing a massive surge in real estate development (Green, 2005). Ward 2 contains the South Loop, one of the city's fastest growing gentrifying neighborhoods (Ranney, 2003). It is in close proximity to the lakefront, the museum, and the Loop. Real estate development is booming and the South Loop is overflowing with lofts, single-family homes, town homes, and both mid and high-rise apartment and condo's (Ranney, 2003; At Properties Chicago Real Estate website, 2010). The price of real estate in the South Loop ranges from \$74,000 for a condo, to more than \$3 million for a single-family home (@properties Chicago Real Estate, 2010). Ward 4 contains Bronzeville and Kenwood, two neighborhoods filled with both newly constructed and historic mansions and brownstones, in addition to mid and high-rise town homes, lofts, and condo's. From 1980 to 1990 the median home value in the area increased from \$25,000 to more than \$125,000 during the first phase of the gentrification process. This year the price of real estate in Bronzeville and Kenwood ranged from: \$3,900 to more than \$2 million, and \$17,000 to \$2.5 million, respectively (@Properties Chicago Real Estate, 2010).

The gentrification of the South Loop, Tri-Taylor, and Bronzeville (Douglas/Grand Boulevard) communities affects a cross section of the Black population. First large numbers of renters and public housing residents who cannot afford to remain in the area, and second home owners who worry about their ability to handle increasing taxes. Middle-class families are also concerned about the southward movement of commercial and real estate developments, as both carry the threat of both political and physical displacement by Whites (Boyd, 2008). Ranney's (2003) findings are supported by the statements of many Black residents at the school Board monthly meetings as well as those made at the public closure/consolidation/turnaround hearings. One parent and alum of a local school stated, "New people are moving into our community, and I no longer live in the district, but I [my children] commute" (Parent, Consolidation and

Relocation Hearing, 2/8/10). Community members testified to the decreasing availability of low-income housing and the decreasing availability of schools (near them) that their children could attend. Community members from the South and West Sides repeatedly expressed that although they no longer lived in the vicinity of the neighborhood school, they commuted (in some cases for more than one hour) so that their children could maintain their connection to their neighborhood school. The most overwhelming theme expressed during the data collection process was that the neighborhood schools were like a family. The communities within them and those that had surrounded them for generations were strongly attached and had in most cases established very intricate community networks.

Parents, students, and faculty view neighborhood schools as an extension of the neighborhood and of themselves. A school social worker that worked at the school for 21 years commented, “If (the school) closes it won’t just hurt the school, it will hurt the neighborhood” (1/28/10). A visibly moved student agreed noting, “(School) is a family. When you separate our students you give our family a divorce. We want to stay together, and we want to leave side by side. I want to email (school counselor) from college” (1/28/10). And still, another community member expressed, “Turnarounds are detrimental to the established relationships” (1/27/10). A current parent and 1997 valedictorian of the neighborhood school stated:

I live across the street from (school). (School) is much more than a school. It’s a body of love that communicates a home through fun filled gatherings, annual picnics and close personal contacts... This overall makes (School) a safe learning environment for every and each one of our youth that attends (school). (School) is surrounded by caring neighbors who make sure that the school is safe, clean, and a wonderful learning environment. (1/28/10)

The ‘School as Home/Family’ theme means that community members overwhelming identified with their neighborhood schools. Assertions that the neighborhood school (its teachers, administrators, and staff) failed students in some way were taken personally, and many students



appeared to internalize the ‘failing’ mantra. At one hearing, after countless students cried, apologized, and promised to ‘do better on the tests’, the Board of Education’s hired mediator Frederick Bates, Esq. responded,

I want to make a comment to the students before I call the next testifier. No matter what happens with your school it is not an indictment on you, it’s not someone judging you. Okay? Its all the adults, okay? It’s not on you. (1/28/10)

Afterwards, the assistant principal of the school provided the most recent standardized test scores of students, and other data, each suggesting an upward trend in student scores and yearly overall gains. Her comments were as follows:

I’m an assistant principal at (School). I am here to ask you not to close our school or any CPS school. I did not come here to apologize for our current upward trends. The record shows that each year (School) has made gains. Instead I came to share with you the reasons why I think (School) should remain open. We have a 89.7% attendance rate, but what you failed to show the audience, I guess, is that when we have a student absent from the building, we might have 6 students absent because our students consist of families. So, when one stays at home, all six stay at home. We constantly visit homes (for truancy)...we go to boarded up houses where our students once lived. When you talk about our students, you’re talking about students in temporary living conditions. (1/28/10)

Over all parents and community members provided a consistent counter narrative to the Boards story of underperforming urban schools and the need to close them and replace them with charter schools. Their narratives attested to: (a) the brilliance of their students especially given the resources removed from their schools and community disinvestment; (b) detailed the steps taken which demonstrate the commitment that teachers and administrators have towards the success and well being of their students; and (c) challenged the way that performance model was constructed and manipulated to produce failing schools. Parents, students and community members insisted that they were indeed involved in their neighborhood schools. Even more so, parents, teachers, students, and community members consistently requested a school-community partnership that included both substantive parental involvement as well as district transparency.

In many cases, parents, teachers, students, and community members offered unsolicited recommendations to the Board specifically how Ren10, and the public school system in general could be improved. In response to the CEO's statement that he had recently created a student bill of rights, the student organization Chicago Youth Initiating Change replied that they (students) had already solicited the input of three thousand CPS students to create a Student Bill of Rights. They questioned his ability to create a Student Bill of Rights without consulting students with statements like, "We know our schools the best. Allow us to transform our own schools". Their rights included: (a) the right to hire and terminate faculty and staff; (b) the right to a free and quality education; and (c) the right to elect a student Board representative that communicates the needs of students at all CPS schools. Their student representation plan: CPS students proposed that each CPS high school elect a student representative to represent the student body. After all schools have a representative, one general representative is then elected (by students) to represent their issues during the Board of Education meetings. The Bill of Rights created by students reflects their desire for educational autonomy and student representation. Their concept of what constitutes 'student rights' is completely different from that of the districts CEO. His list included: (a) the right to go to a receiving school that has performed at least 20% better on the CPS performance policy when their neighborhood school is closed; (b) when the receiving school is more than 1.5 miles away from their closed neighborhood school, CPS will provide transportation; and finally (c) a *published* safe passage plan that communities can review.

Students, parents, teachers and community members continually assert their right to democratically participate in the creation of policies that affect their lives. They represent strong communities who advocate for academically sound schools within their residential boundaries, and they continue to express a great desire to work with the Board in creating good schools for

all children. The constant miscommunication or willful ignorance of the district and its refusal to include them incites confusion, suspicion, and hostility. Community members are experts in their students and the resources of their neighborhoods, and they continue to offer criticism of Ren10. For example, the impracticality of turnarounds/closures/and consolidations for students is characterized by the following student critique,

How can seniors get college recommendations from teachers who hardly know them? You don't experience what we do on an everyday basis. There should be a student representative from every school that is invited to come to Board meetings. Why are they (board meetings) held in the mornings on school days? (January Board Meeting)

The following statements also represent the second overwhelming theme repeated throughout the data collection process—the need for school-community partnerships:

Partnerships between community and schools are essential. [Reforms should] not be done to the communities but *with* communities. (Teacher, January Board meeting)

Parents were turned away from Tilden. There should be parent-school partnerships but parents are treated like strangers. The LSC is not involved in any school changes. (Parent, January Board meeting)

Smaller classes work—this [Ren10] is incongruent with combining schools. When [School] combined it got on probation. True reform is with us and not to us. The Chicago Teachers Union opposes Renaissance 2010. (Chicago Teacher's Union President, January Board meeting)

We know our schools the best. Allow us to transform our students. Students lose their lives waiting for entrance to charter schools. This isn't working. We need individual solutions for individual schools. (CPS student, January Board meeting)

Parents, students, teachers, and community members also detailed a variety of ways in which the CPS administration engaged in practices that disproportionately affected the educational resources and opportunities of their students. The following statements echoed the general sentiment during the data collection phase:

Give us the funding you give magnets. (8<sup>th</sup> grade student, 1/28/10)

Smaller classes work, why are you combining (consolidating) schools...(School) was consolidated and was put on probation... (Chicago Teachers Union President, January Board Meeting)

No one concentrates on our progress, just our failures... (Student at School hearing, 1/30/10)

We deserve as much as the rich do. (Parent at hearing, 1/30/10)

I haven't seen one turnaround school outside of our community. (Alderman Ed. Smith at Education Committee hearing to propose a moratorium on school closings, 2/21/10)

These policies benefit your class, not the working class majority. (Community member at January Board meeting).

We need individual solutions for individual schools. (Student at January board meeting)

All students should have this kind of school. There should be equal access to good schools, not only for the gifted. (Parent of students attending a CPS magnet school, January Board Meeting)

The parents and community members from some schools arrive with prepared statements and data that contradict the assessments of their schools by CPS administrators. Teachers and administrators clearly take offense to what they call "the inaccurate data publicized by the CPS administration" and the conclusions drawn from that data (Community meeting, 1/9/10). Many community members argue that the Board defames the character of the students and staff at neighborhood schools. One community member stated, "They are talking about us like our kids aren't smart...like we aren't smart" (School hearing, 2/3/10). Another parent added, "We are not your poster child for low performance" (School hearing, 1/27/10), a teacher asked, "If this is not an indictment against the students or teachers, then who?" (School hearing, 2/3/10), and still another insisted, "(CPS is) telling the media that the kids are low performing just because you want to give the school to someone else" (January School Board Meeting). Instead of comparing schools with very different student populations and conditions to one another or measuring performance against an abstract level, community members assert that a true and valid

assessment of student performance would include an entrance/exit evaluation as well as comparisons between schools in the same area (with similar student/family demographics). Many of the schools slated for closure, they argued, had scores above those of other schools in the area. Additionally, each of the schools reported that their students standardized achievement scores had significantly improved each year.

Parents, students, teachers, and community members who testified at monthly board meetings and February's school closure hearings repeatedly emphasized the value of the neighborhood school to the surrounding community. Most stressed that their disdain for Ren10 comes from the knowledge that after years of continued disinvestment, neighborhood schools are publicly discredited then closed. The buildings are then renovated and turned over to education management organizations and charter school companies. Because they are privately owned and managed the schools replacing their neighborhood schools are not required to include the community in its decision-making process. Formerly open enrollment neighborhood schools are replaced by charter schools or contract schools that may or may not admit their children. They voiced concerns over the safety of students traveling through the territories of multiple street gangs to schools they considered no better (and in some cases worse) than their neighborhood school. Above all, the majority of parents, students and community members consistently *chose* their neighborhood school.

Still it seems likely that when populations decrease there is less need for many of the schools that served them. When evaluating the kernel density estimation maps from 1989 to 2010, what we expect to find is that in neighborhoods with increasing populations (Latino/a, White) the density of schools increases as well. And Figures 15-18 support what we would expect---in areas with increasing populations we find more schools.

### Kernal Density: 1989 CPS Schools

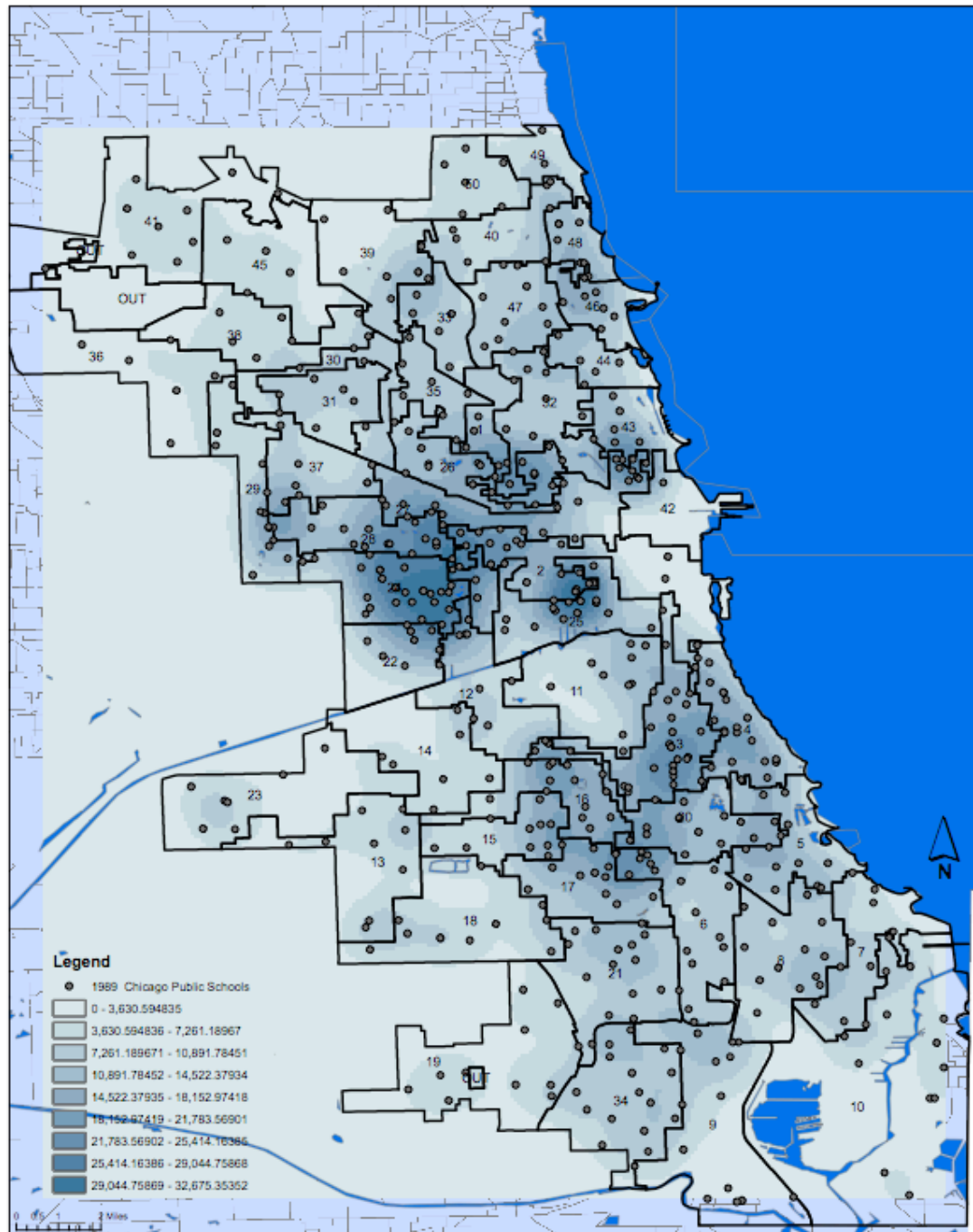
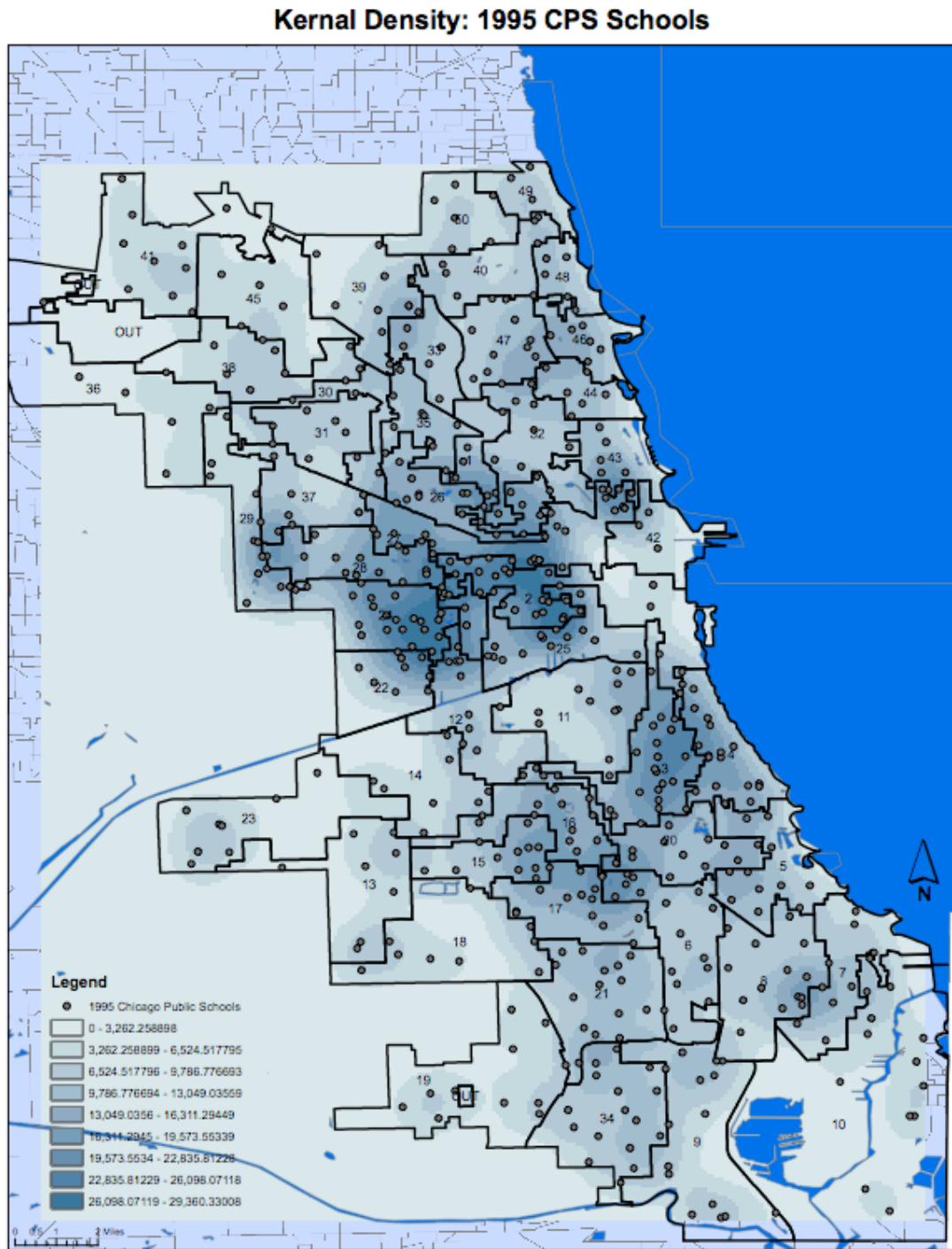


Figure 15. Kernel Density Estimation, 1989 Chicago Public Schools by ward. Radius = 1.38 mi



*Figure16.* Kernel Density Estimation, 1995 CPS Schools by ward. Radius = 1.38 mi

### Kernal Density: 2004 CPS Schools

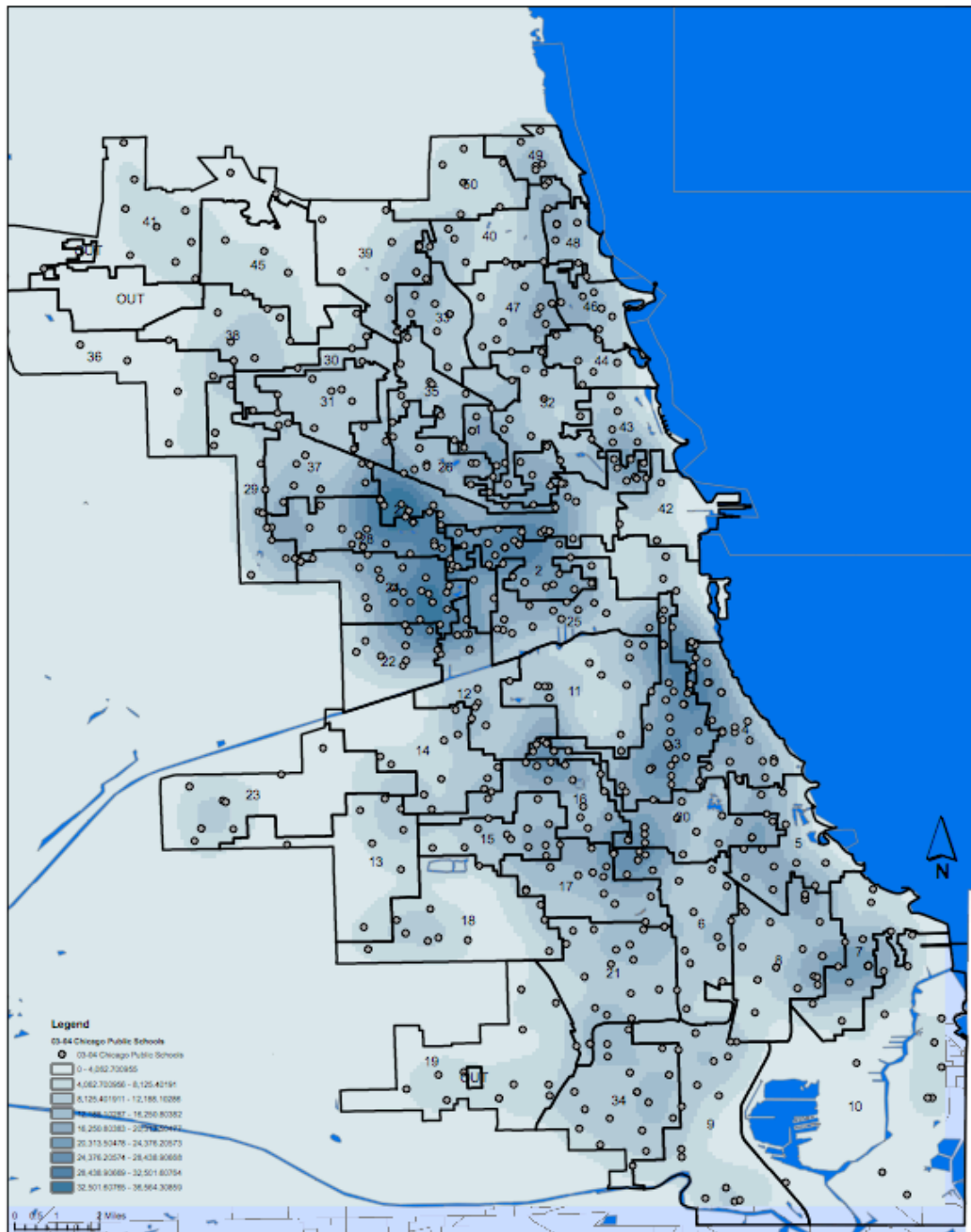


Figure 17. Kernel Density Estimation, 2004 Chicago Public Schools by ward. Radius = 1.38 mi



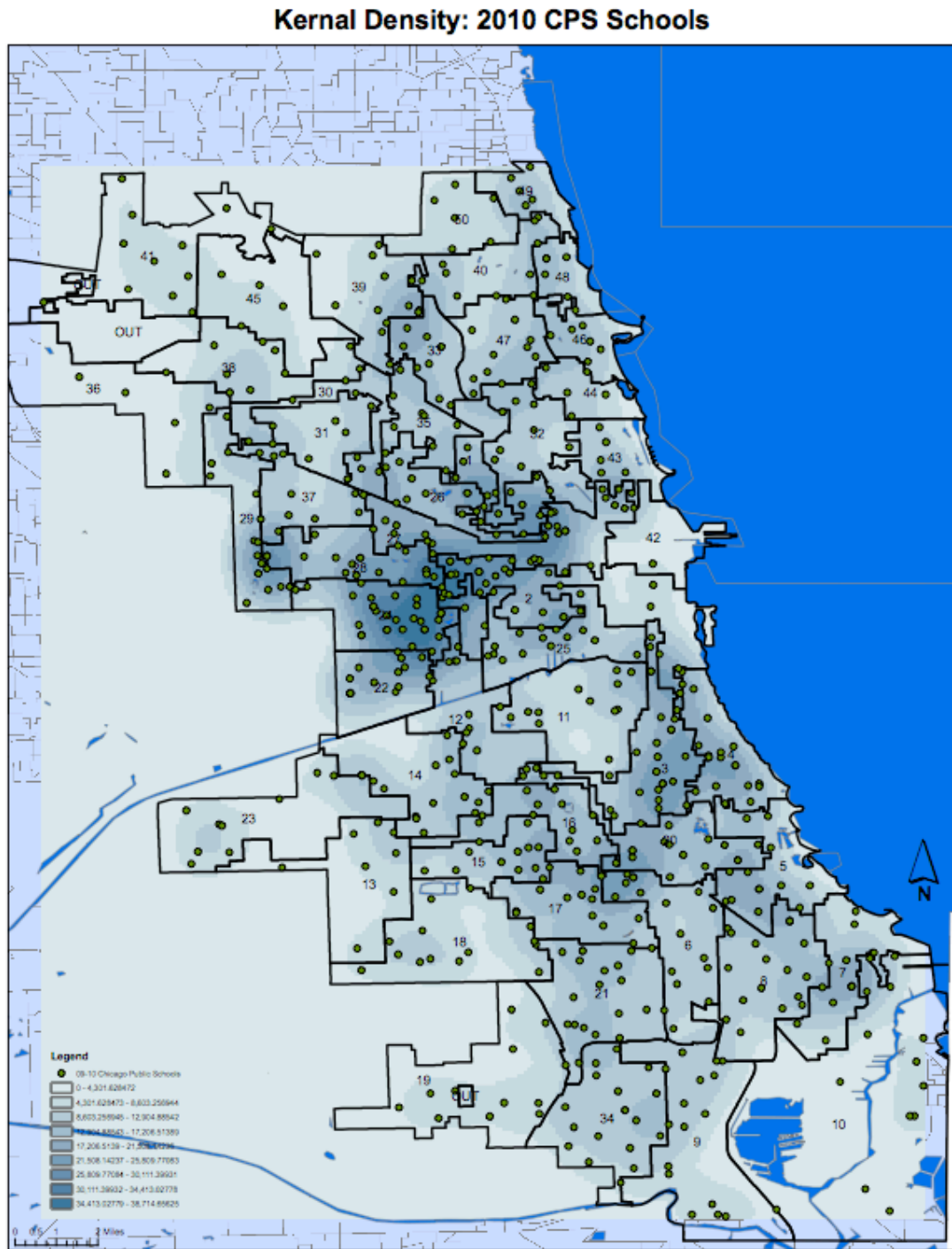


Figure 18. Kernel Density Estimation, 2010 Chicago Public Schools by Ward. Radius = 1.38 mi

Alternately, for neighborhoods experiencing decreasing populations, we would expect that the number of schools would decrease (as supported by Figures 12-14, with special attention to Wards 2-4), as would the density of schools within those areas. We would expect a lower concentration of schools where there are signs of decreasing populations. However (Figures 15-18) show that the opposite is the true. For the most part from 1989 to 2010, the density of schools located on the South and West Sides of the city—areas experiencing such drastic loss in neighborhood schools—remains the same. With particular attention to the gentrifying areas on the South and West Sides, a continued infusion of charter and contract schools within areas experiencing a large population decline suggests that more is going on.

The schools closed under the Ren10 policy overwhelmingly occur in neighborhoods that are heavily populated with large concentrations of low-income Blacks. Given the city's early goal of recruiting middle-class White's to the city, as stated in *Chicago 21*, it is my contention that under the current neoliberal administration, Renaissance 2010 works in conjunction with the Chicago Housing Authority and other public institutions to implement policies that encourage gentrification and that allow the city to clear the land of its large concentration of Blacks and low income residents. This is done under the guise of urban renewal, and most times the displaced inhabitants are blamed for allowing the neighborhood, its schools, and its residential areas to degenerate. After disinvesting in the communities and blaming them for the conditions that are the result of the city's disinvestment, neighborhood spaces and places are re-claimed. Just as CPS administrators and city officials announced in 2004, Ren10's new schools are overwhelmingly located in low-income neighborhoods. Given the city's complicated and ever changing point system, which is applied to validate the closing of 'failed' schools, it is unlikely

that CPS administrators predicted the need to replace about 103 neighborhood schools with 100 Ren10 schools, six years in advance.

These findings suggest that given the city's 1973 mission to repurpose the city for the perceived needs of middle-class Whites, the school closings are apart of a much larger plan to change the demographics of the city itself. The narratives of members from community organizations, as well as those of CPS students and parents support the analysis that Ren10 is a policy to cleanse urban areas. For example, De La Cruz was a school with 98% low-income students and a 20% special education population. They excelled academically, met Adequate Yearly Progress three years in a row and had even received an award from the city to honor their academic achievements. Still, the school was slated to close with the Board citing the physical structure as beyond repair. A week before De La Cruz closed, contractors arrived and began to renovate the facility, and by the next academic term the De La Cruz facility was home to a new charter school (Community member, Committee on Education and Child Development meeting, 2/22/2010).

The De La Cruz narrative is repeated in schools across the city. In the case of school closure for facility deterioration, many community members report that upon closure or consolidation of neighborhood schools, the facilities are infused with public funds. This occurs in schools that have been requesting improvements to their facilities for years. In one case, a student revealed that air conditioners were being installed during the last week of school, although the school was on the list to close. Community members, students, and teachers at one South Side school testified that a few days after receiving notification that the Board was considering closing their school, hundreds of boxes were delivered to the facility with instructions to begin packing. The alderman of the ward, Alderman Dowell, added, "Sending

moving equipment before the vote is inappropriate.” Community members expressed low political efficacy and little faith in the validity of the community participation component that followed. The arrival of moving boxes a week before the Board was to vote, and before the public participation process was a clear signal to community students, teachers, administrators, and parents that there was little legitimate interest in involving them in the public school policy decisions that affect their lives. Additionally, the Board’s decision to begin renovations to a facility that has been deemed beyond repair, in their presence, results in an increase in hostility and mistrust amongst displaced students, parents, and teachers.

Their narratives and distrust are rooted in, not only their current experiences with Ren10, but their knowledge of and experience with its predecessor, the Mid-South Plan. The Mid-South Plan was created during the urban renewal projects for the Douglas and Grand Boulevard communities (Boyd, 2008). It was designed to close twenty of the twenty-two schools in the area, and replace them with what we now know as Renaissance 2010 schools (Brown, Gutstein, and Lipman, 2009). Implemented as early as 1997 through reconstitution, and in conjunction with the Chicago Housing Authority’s ‘Plan for Transformation’, schools were closed, public housing facilities were demolished and students were moved from place to place. A large majority of the public housing facilities that were dismantled served large concentrations of African American parents, students and community members on the South Side of the city (Brown, Gutstein, and Lipman, 2009; Shipps, 2009). However it is important to note that although the individual residents of the South Side communities are primarily Black, they are not its only stakeholders. White institutional residents like Mercy and Michael Reese Hospitals, De La Salle High School, the First National Bank, the Illinois College of Optometry, and the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) represent sizable and powerful stakeholders that are not to be

ignored (Boyd, 2008). Evidence of this occurred a generation before when the community was powerless against IIT when it demolished commercial property and homes, displacing between forty-five to fifty thousand residents to expand its campus (Boyd, 2008). The declining neighborhood, a direct result of the university's incomplete investment in the neighborhood, produced less than successful results for the campus. IIT continued to experience decreasing student enrollment and declining faculty retention. After the expansion, the president of the university claimed that the negative perception of the surrounding community continued to produce mixed reviews in the marketplace for the campus (Boyd, 2008). Shortly thereafter the university, realizing that its continued growth and vitality was deeply entangled with the surrounding neighborhood, got a grant from the McCormick-Tribune Foundation to enhance the campus and attract additional capital for the revitalization of the area (Boyd, 2008). IIT administrators began to create a plan for the neighborhood, which included shutting down the local public transportation station at 35<sup>th</sup> and State Street. The suggestion was not well received by residents, however after continued and unsuccessful protests local organizations decided to collaborate with IIT—it was better to be defined from within than from without (Boyd, 2008). The plan that resulted from the grassroots efforts of the neighborhoods organizations, Restoring Bronzeville, was refused by the city. Instead their role became that of a community-building intermediary, a place where developers could publicize and explain their projects and the community could ask pointed questions. The authority of the community was minimal (they could not approve or deny the plans of developers) and served as more of a representation of community approval, than the actual mechanism for it (Boyd, 2008).

The product of IIT and the city's economic development project was the Mid-South Plan. The aspects of the Mid South Plan that relate to the local public schools bear remarkable

similarity to Renaissance 2010. The Board notified parents of students in Mid-South schools on the last day of school that their neighborhood school would be closing (Brown, Gutstein, & Lipman, 2009). The Mid-South Plan ran parallel to the demolition of public housing units on the South and West Sides. The accountability argument was refined during the execution of the Mid-South Plan, for students, parents, and teachers. In the spring of 1996 Daley changed the process of promoting students, connecting their performance on the nationally normed Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) to their retention or promotion to the next grade. Accountability for educators came during Reconstitution. Again, ITBS test scores were used to determine whether schools would be put on probation, and the performance standard was incrementally raised each year. The consequences of probation were (a) Local School Councils lost their authority, (b) principals could be terminated by the CEO, and (c) the discretionary budget of the school was turned over to ‘external assistance partners’ (Shipps, 2009). In reconstituted schools, teachers, principals and other staff members were required to reapply for their jobs. Re-hired teachers experienced increased shame and less autonomy when the district enforced scripted lesson plans (Shipps, 2009). In addition to the loss of LSC authority, parents received a taste of the mayor’s interpretation of accountability in 2000. He initiated parent report cards, which included twenty-three evaluation marks for variables like “spends quality time with child” (Shipps, 2009). After six years, the mayor’s education reforms were highly criticized. He replaced CEO Paul Vallas with Arne Duncan, who removed the district’s mandated scripted lesson plans. And, after advice from the U.S. Department of Justice that the districts retention plans were discriminatory, he amended the process. The CPS retention policy continues to disproportionately retain African American students (Shipps, 2009).

‘Improvements’ to the Mid-South Plan have transformed its education component into what we now know as Renaissance 2010. The Mid-South Plan introduced privatization on a much smaller scale and only seven of the thirty-eight probation high schools could be usurped. Individual, school, and district wide results of the ITBS were widely available and therefore probationary status was easily challenged. Furthermore, many of the district’s policies were criticized as discriminatory or insulting to parents, teachers, and administrators. There was too much coddling required. With Renaissance 2010 the probation criteria was changed to include a larger amount of schools within the pool of probationary schools. The language of the Illinois School Code was changed to refer to schools as ‘attendance centers’. And the general attendant was given the power to use ‘objective criteria, not just an increase in test scores’ in deciding whether a school should remain on probation (Illinois School Code Section 34-8.3).

Furthermore, the state’s school code now states that if the Board of Education or the general superintendent has reason to believe that “a school is in educational crisis it may take immediate corrective action, including the actions specified in this section (34-8.3), without first placing the school on remediation or probation” (Illinois School Code Section 34-8.3). Corrective action includes closure, consolidation, and turnarounds, and the school board develops the criteria that defines ‘educational crisis’. More importantly, the factors that were used to determine probation status were complicated. Each school is now judged using fourteen separate (non-specified) measures, worth three points each, for a total of forty-two points (Ryan Crosby, Director of Performance Policy for CPS, Consolidation Hearing, 2/8/10). The district attempts to confuse the public with closure/consolidation criteria that relies on a value added metric, regression analysis and other ‘subjective variables. In one instance community members used the stated criteria, and found errors with the Board’s calculation. When they refuted their school’s arrival on the

proposed closing/consolidation/turnaround list, the CEO suggested that they simply didn't understand the formula. The community concluded that their school was selected because it had recently received a new addition and was in better physical condition than nearby schools. (Alderwoman Lyle, Committee on Education and Child Development hearing, 2/21/10).



## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Resistance in Contested Spaces**

Throughout the data collection process there were multiple protests, press conferences, workshops, and rallies—each created to express resistance to Renaissance 2010. Almost immediately the collaboration between parent organizations, student organizations, teacher organizations and community groups, was clear. One example of the united community of resisters occurred on Monday, February 22, 2010 in the Council Chambers of City Hall. It was on that afternoon that Alderwoman Pat Dowell of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward and Alderwoman Freddrenna Lyle of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ward requested that a meeting be called for the Committee on Education and Child Development. The request was made on behalf of the Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force, and was signed by the two aforementioned alderwomen in addition to Alderman Toni Periwinkle of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward, and Alderman Howard B. Brookings Jr. of the 21<sup>st</sup> Ward. The city's Education committee, whose members are appointed alderpeople from thirty-three of Chicago's wards, had only met once during the academic school year, although most of the city's schools would close for the summer in three months.

More than two hundred community members filled the rows of the Council Chambers that afternoon. Many planned to testify in hopes of persuading the committee to recommend that the Board of Education immediately discontinue its current practice of school closures, consolidations, and turnarounds. However, at the start of the hearing, the chairwoman of the committee, Alderwoman Latasha R. Thomas of the 17<sup>th</sup> Ward, informed the groups of parents, teachers, and community members that the hearing was closed to public testimony. After a lengthy argument between the chairwoman, Alderman Ricardo Munoz, and supporters, and most

notably after Munoz' continued assertions that Thomas' actions were illegal, the chairwoman relented. She did however remind her colleagues that, "We in City Council are not their governing board. We have no jurisdiction over CPS."

The two alderwomen that called for the meeting had done so in response to the affect of Renaissance 2010 on their wards. At the hearing they proposed two resolutions:

1. Resolution sponsored by Alderman Dowell and Alderman Lyle requiring a moratorium of one year be placed on current and future school closings, consolidations, turnarounds, and phase-outs until comprehensive strategy of transparency, community involvement, and public accountability can be developed to include recommendations from the Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force (PR2010-7)
2. Resolution sponsored by Alderman Dowell and Alderman Lyle asking for the Board of Education to appear and present all underlying data, objective findings, criteria and other considerations for the selection of all schools subject to the aforementioned actions in the 2010 school year on date and time prior to February 24, 2010 (PR2010-8).

The recommendation of the Chicago Education Facilities Task Force was the imposition of a one-year moratorium, and the deadline listed, February 24, 2010, was the date of the next Board meeting. It was on that date that Board members would vote to close, consolidate, turnaround or phase-out 14 schools. The explanation for the recommendations of the Task Force were as follows:

- (a) The profound impact of such actions on entire communities; (b) That acute community knowledge of both the resources and dangers within their communities had not been valued, specifically regarding issues of safe passage; (c) The CPS leadership has made decisions to close, consolidate, phase-out and turnaround schools with insufficient input from affected communities; (d) Instead decisions were made based on inaccurate or outdated data that failed to consider recent improvements; (e) Many of the schools slated to close or consolidate experienced years of significant academic and capital disinvestment; (f) Before any drastic actions are taken, the CPS administration must examine its policies regarding the distribution of resources for academic and capital needs; (g) That the CPS leadership has demonstrated the lack of a comprehensive long-term planning by failing to fully consider the development and growth necessary to create and maintain accessible neighborhood schools; (h) Throughout the process of school reconstitutions many good teachers and administrators that have established a positive relationship with their students have been thrown into the job market during harsh economic times; (i) Many studies have found that there is are negative academic

and safety impacts for students with high rates of mobility; (j) Given the Boards lack of transparency and refusal to involve the community in the decision-making process, there is a growing distrust of CPS decisions; And finally (k) many of the new schools that have been created under Ren10 and schools that have been reconstituted are not performing better than the schools they replaced, and in many cases they are performing worse. Alderwoman Thomas closed with the following statement, “It is not in our mandate to outsource education simply to remove it from our list of things to do.” (2/21/10)

Illinois State Senators William Delgado and Jacquelyn Collins traveled from Springfield to endorse the recommendation, and they submitted the written testimony of Senator Cynthia Soto. The senators requested ‘a pause’ until a meeting could be held by the comprehensive Task Force created with House Bill 363 (HB 363). House Bill 363 unifies neighborhoods by bringing community-based organizations from every part of the city (Grand Boulevard Federation, Pilsen Neighbors, Blocks Together, Designs for Change), the CTU president, the Principals Association, CPS board members, CEO Ron Huberman, and two senate members together to discuss alternative methods for Chicago Public School reforms. Because the governor signed HB363, and the task force was scheduled to meet within the month, he voiced concern that the Board continued to close, consolidate, and turnaround schools based on its own political agenda. Senator Collins discussed the necessity of equal access to quality education for participatory democracy. Compared to other states, Illinois contributes a relatively low share of funding to its public schools, which makes local funding disparities much larger than they might otherwise be (Shipps, 2009). Collins informed the committee that she and others in Springfield were working on the lack of funding issue for Chicago Public Schools and removing the states over reliance on property taxes to support education. Senator Collins emphasized that all stakeholders should be involved and that the Board offered no hard data to validate why schools were proposed for turnaround, consolidation, and closure. In closing, she expressed displeasure with the Boards last

minute notification that a school within her district was closing stating, “I received a call the night before, which is disrespectful” (2/21/10).

After the testimony from the senators and alderpeople, the members of the Board (Ron Huberman, Dr. Barbara Easton-Watkins, and Robert Runchie) were excused for a meeting, and Alderwoman Thomas promised that they would return within the next twenty minutes. Although the hearing continued for more than two hours afterwards, the Board members never returned. Drove of children did arrive. They had to leave their handmade protest signs and posters in the hall, and they were not permitted to comment.

The fact that the Board members left before the public was allowed to voice its concerns, combined with their historic failings to attend the public hearings on school closures/consolidations, makes their rhetoric of transparency and public accountability all the more repugnant. Community members repeatedly comment on the lack of respect they are shown. During a school closure hearing one community member testified, “Someone with authority and responsibility should be here. The community showed up in thirteen below weather, we travel 10 miles away, and yet no authoritative person is here today.” (Community member, School Closure Hearing, 2/3/10)

Beyond the role of the passive consumer there appears to be no sincere desire to involve community members in developing and improving the district’s education policies. However, those that contest Ren10 refuse to be silenced. As I finish this project, the CORE slate has overthrown the current Chicago Teachers Union administration. CORE, a grassroots organization of teachers, successfully campaigned against the CTU slate by promising to offer true reform and insert the voices of teachers, students, and parents. The organization was created in response to the refusal of the CTU leaders to organize teachers to oppose Ren10 school

closings and privatizations. Although the current president of the CTU, Marilyn Stewart, rhetorically opposed Renaissance 2010 during my data collection process, many teachers complained that she had not been vigilant in protecting their interests in the late 90s when these policies gained momentum (Shipps, 2009). Their leadership complaints are in reference to the 1995 change in the school law that set restrictions on the Chicago Teachers Unions ability to achieve non-pecuniary gains through collective bargaining (Shipps, 2009, p. 124). Teachers were prohibited from striking for eighteen months and the Board was granted the ability to terminate teachers and principals, the previous responsibility of state hearing officers. Class size, teaching assignments, school schedules and ten other previously bargained workplace conditions were removed from the school code. The mayor asked CTU representatives to allow the anti-union restrictions, and promised to remove the restrictions after he gained control. Although he kept his promise, the failure of CTU leaders to oppose the law (which additionally granted the CEO the special authority to sanction schools with remediation, probation, reconstitution or intervention) produced many disgruntled teachers who felt that appeasing the mayor was largely motivated by personal gain.

The institutionalization of neoliberal rationales has resulted in the removal of a disproportionate amount of Black teachers. Between 2000 and 2008 White, Latina/o, Asian and Native American teachers have experienced a percentage gain. During the same time Black teachers have experienced a net loss of 2,469 teachers, a nine-point percentage drop (PURE Parents, 2010). Yet the underlying rationale for their termination continues to be under dispute. The city reports that it has faced massive budgetary losses, coupled with decreased student enrollment and state funds. They conclude that the termination of many teachers has been the unavoidable result. Still, experienced and displaced teachers report that although they have been

removed from their schools they are in a state of limbo, where they have continued to receive their salary with little to no likelihood of returning to the job unless it is as a substitute. The narrative of community members, in this case a disgruntled faction of teachers that has broken off from the Chicago Teacher's Union, is that an innumerable amount of talent and resources are wasted each day because skilled teachers have no placements. Their narratives contradict those of city officials who claim that their reforms are cost effective and efficient. In response to the city's actions, displaced Black teachers have filed equal opportunity complaints and have, with the support from CORE, enlisted an attorney to represent them in a civil suit. The suit charges that the massive dismissal of primarily Black veteran teachers and their replacement with uncertified White teachers is racially discriminatory. By the end of the project, community members, parents, students, and teachers continued to resist Renaissance 2010.

### **Summary of Findings**

In 1988, participatory democracy was institutionalized in the form of Local School Councils. By 1995 the legitimacy of parents and community members to make substantive decisions about public schooling was continually questioned, and that doubt was reflected in changes to the Illinois School Code. As an institutional actor, CPS officials use the Renaissance 2010 policy to first close neighborhood schools, and then to repurpose those facilities for charter, contract, and otherwise privately managed 'new' schools. At this time, the snatch and run process is tuned to communities on the South and West Sides where residents are primarily low-income and Black. Their communities are in the process of 'revitalization' or 'gentrification', and therefore the current residents are not valued by the current administration. To the CPS administrations claim of school failure, community members provide a counter narrative that performance measures are structured in ways that label 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Chicago Public Schools as

‘failing’. Their collective narratives make the case that academic progress is not the issue and that since the mayor’s office has taken control of the schools, it is inappropriate to continue to attribute failure or blame to the teachers, students, and administrators within those schools.

The community narrative that their neighborhoods are targeted is supported by the empirical data as well. The chloropleth maps produced from this study indicate that indeed, the majority of neighborhood schools closed with Ren10 are located in areas that are primarily Black and low-income. Together this projects kernel density maps and chloropleth maps suggest that although there have been large drops in the proportion of low-income Blacks on the South and West Sides, there has not been substantial change to the density of schools within those areas. This evidence supports the community narrative that their neighborhoods are being targeted, especially neighborhoods that are in close proximity to Lake Michigan and the city’s central business district which have experienced the majority of neighborhood school closings.

Critics may argue that such changes reflect the redevelopment or reinvestment in South Side and West Side neighborhoods, and that the displacement of low-income residents is the natural result of free market competition. Others may argue that in some areas, middle-class Blacks and Latino/as are themselves the gentrifiers. However, the benefits received by some Blacks or Latino/as do not detract from the structural disenfranchisement of others. Within the Douglas/Grand Boulevard communities, low-income residents have expressed an equal fear and hostility toward middle-and-upper income Black residents as they did toward White outsiders and neighborhood institutions (Shipps, 2009, p. 112). Low-income residents of gentrifying areas have little control over the revitalization process that occurs in their neighborhoods. They understand the connection between their exclusion from the decision-making process and how it threatens their ability to remain in their neighborhoods (Shipps, 2009). Like all communities, the

residents on Chicago's South and West Sides are a very dichotomous population in terms of need, and economic differences translate into diverse sets of preferences (Shipps, 2009, p. 110). However, again the benefits received by middle-class Blacks do not translate into direct benefits for members of the entire race.

Furthermore, despite the constant references to residents as customers by several Board members, and its use of neoliberal language, there is nothing 'free market' about Renaissance 2010. To the contrary there is immense state and local government manipulation specifically geared towards ensuring the success, longevity, and profitability of private corporations. By lobbying Springfield, the CPS administration and the Chicago business community have used law to disempower communities and their Local School Councils. In changing the percentage of required unionized and certified teachers, city officials have removed the threat of unionized labor or empowered parents, both unwelcome outsiders. The shut out begins before the physical spaces have been taken over, and usually occurs immediately after the announcement that a school has been slated for closure. Despite claims to the contrary, the private sector could not have entered the public education 'market' or multiplied within it without government support.

The institutionalization of this policy has reproduced racism within housing, education and employment policy. Together, these policies disproportionately and negatively affect low-income Blacks in the city. Betancur (2002) suggests that descriptions of gentrification as a market practice that allocates land for the best possible use, or the process of substituting a poorer group for a wealthier one, typically ignore the highly destructive processes of race, class, ethnicity, and alienation that result (p. 807). He maintains that the right to community is a function of a group's economic and political power and that the process of gentrification is truly a set of forces that manipulate class and race to determine market outcome (Betancur, 2002, p.



807). City officials have structured policy specifically for the purpose of acquiring and redeveloping the spaces that low-income Blacks inhabit. Within housing policy, the Chicago Housing Authority's incorporation of neoliberal rational has resulted in the displacement of large proportions of low-income blacks. It has both privatized public housing and excluded the majority of low-income residents from directly benefiting from the new 'mixed income' developments. They are instead forced into the private market with vouchers which, given the turn away from social service supports, can be permanently revoked for minor infractions. Although the city has created an increasing percentage of displaced low-income Black residents (as a result of the demolition of public housing units), the application process is closed for all public housing facilities. The Chicago Housing Authority website fails to indicate if, or when, the application process will re-open.

Currently Chicago's education policies have worked in conjunction with public housing policy to displace two identifiable groups, low-income Black students and families, and Black teachers. Ren10 is a racially and economically discriminatory policy that is carried out in the name of efficiency and accountability. It labels public schools as failures, and in cases where that is impossible, buildings are deemed structurally unsound. Ren10 works to aid in the removal of low-income Blacks by destroying the neighborhood schools, the anchor of many communities, which unite generations of residents. Using Ren10, city officials then repurpose those schools for future residents, and more importantly, they facilitate the creation of opportunities for private profit with public funds. Chicago's latest education policy rests on the assumption that private education, any private education, is better than what the public can offer. Although charter schools are quite new, many preliminary research studies report that, although they enroll significantly fewer students with special needs, they do not perform any better than the schools

that they replace (Center for Research on Education Outcomes, 2009). Still, charter and Ren10 schools that open in buildings that were originally neighborhood schools receive more resources than preexisting schools. Shipps (2009) writes that although they are attended by three percent of the city's students, sixty-two percent of Ren10 new schools have their capital needs fully funded, compared to forty-five percent of neighborhood schools. Finally, through Ren10, city officials have lobbied to remove the possibility of both organized labor and organized parents within Ren10 schools. These actions wholeheartedly benefit private investors.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Institutional racism thrives in Chicago's education system because it relies on a few rarely questioned assumptions. The first is that all students are not equally deserving of quality schools. Some are simply better prepared and more intelligent than others. These students deserve quality schools—magnet academies—which are infused with material and economic resources that structure their achievement. Their teachers have autonomy, their classes are small, their curriculum requires them to critically think, and their environments are structured in ways that nurture multidimensional academic and social development. Their parents are involved, their teachers are qualified, and the students themselves 'try'. For the remaining student population, the narrative is much different. Test scores are the way we measure their growth. For these students, no matter how many resources you give them, it doesn't improve their test scores, and the traditional line is that 'throwing money at these schools' doesn't help. These students need discipline and they must be taught social skills. Their teachers are over paid and highly unqualified, their parents are uninvolved and the students refuse to learn. If the above are taken for granted, the relevant question becomes, who decides which students can attend the 'good' schools?

With a global economy that is in a recession, and the promotion of individual self-interest above all else, when it comes to the competition for educational resources, political empowerment and participatory democracy become exceedingly important. Earlier this year, in March 2010, Azam Ahmed a reporter for the Chicago Tribune broke the story that the former CEO of the Chicago Public Schools system and the nations current Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, maintained a running list of friends who required assistance gaining entry into the city's highest performing (read: good) public schools. That such a list exists is a validation that there exists a two-tier school system within the city's public schools. Any resident could tell a visitor which schools are the 'good schools' and which are the ones they should avoid. Each resident knows that to gain entry into the 'good schools' requires a bit of luck, a touch of smarts, and a lot of connections. Although the news was announced with shock, I don't know anyone who was surprised that such a list existed.

CRT provides both the language and historical and contemporary context to discuss the changing landscape of a public education system that simultaneously provides the best and worst educational opportunities for Chicago students (Rossi and Gotlab, 2009). When applied to the recent example of magnet school admissions, CRT can be used to highlight how property interests outweigh the interests of people of color. Therefore, when the Chicago Public School chief executive officer Ron Huberman announced at the December school board meeting that race would no longer be used in the admissions decisions of the city's highly selective magnet schools, the passionate protests from communities of color attending the meeting can be understood within the context of racialized power and economic subordination. Admission requirements for magnet schools is important in Chicago not only because such schools are selective, but because the students who attend have access to an enriched curriculum which

emphasizes critical thinking, logic and reasoning. The restriction of access to this curriculum highlights whiteness as property, specifically the right to include or exclude (Harris, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1998). As the legal requirement of racial equity ends, the school board has replaced the goals of desegregation and equal representation within magnet schools, with an increased support of the choice provided by Ren10. Their fear of lawsuits for preferential treatment and colorblind rationales are used as a justification for the preservation and solidification of hierarchal relationships of power that solidify White spaces, while sacrificing the rights of the othered.

The history of people of color and Chicago politics reveals that cooperation with the machine can translate into political, economic, and social survival. Usually the greatest benefit for Blacks and Latino/as is achieved when interests align. Derrick Bell, one of CRT's founders, refers to this phenomenon as interest-convergence. Interest-convergence maintains that advantages for people of color, low-income people, and other marginalized groups is encouraged and attained only when the advance is in the self-interest of Whites (Bell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). The concept of interest-convergence is instrumental in understanding the position of Chicago's political movers and shakers on issues of race and social justice in the context of civil rights laws and reforms. It is not such a leap to expect that those with similar interests bond together to fight for what is best for them at the time, or that alliances can be made in order to produce intended consequences. Within the highly racialized city of Chicago, with extreme polarity's between residential, educational, and even employment options, we see this phenomena play out spatially throughout the city. For example, although currently Latina/o communities have avoided massive amounts of school closings, historically we know that protection from the machine can change with the wind. The current exclusion of Latino/as from

some of the devastations of Ren10 occurs in part because group interests, or more specifically the interests of Latino/a elites, converge with the city's business community. However, the city has continued to express its goal to recruit middle-class and affluent residents to the city. It is likely that the majority of Latina/o neighborhood schools remain because it is politically unpopular and stringently contested, and just as likely that it is also a divide and conquer political tool used to decrease the strength of those who oppose the city's specific definition of urban revitalization.

Within Chicago, people of color continue to work from both within the machine's political framework, and from without through community-based organizations, to retain and manifest the goods and services they desire. All schools that qualify for closure, consolidation, or phase out action are not included on what is usually known as 'the list'. The criteria for the final selection process are unknown to community, school, and parent leaders. By the CEO's own admission, the list is not final. Schools can be removed at any time, and community members recognize and contest the subjective nature of the selection process as the right to remove and exclude at will. CORE and other community organizations like Teachers for Social Justice and PURE work with schools and parents to fight school action at every turn. CORE members celebrate that their efforts have led to the removal of a steadily increasing number of schools from the list, since the practice began. The mounted attack usually includes a direct rebuttal of the CEO's assessments of a school. For example, if the school is slated to close for underperformance, community organizations, parents, and students provide additional data that suggests improvement and/or a different analysis of the school data. If low enrollment is the issue, community organizations, parents, and students provide a list of benefits that accompany a small school atmosphere. These are usually identical to those provided by the district in support

of its Small Schools initiative. The existence with the district of both a push *for* small schools and a push to *close* them (termed under-enrollment) is indeed confounding. And finally, when schools are slated to close because of a failing infrastructure, the school community provides their own inspectors and contractors who testify to both the preferred economic benefit of fixing the structure over demolishing it. Their estimates are usually lower than those provided by the city officials who have concluded that the school is too costly to renovate.

In some cases, schools are removed from the list and in others they are not. Those that receive the most community support and those that have provided what could be considered irrefutable evidence, are most likely to be spared. However, the underlying rationale of the CEO's decision to remove a school remains unknown. It is important to note here that the Board of Education has never voted against the CEO's recommendations for school action. When schools are removed from the list, it is done by the CEO, and before the closed vote of the Board. His rationale for changing his recommendation is phrased as a commitment to working with the school community and as proof of the flexibility and rationality of the central administration, and, of course, proof of the ability of community members to become involved and provide a suitable plan for solutions to fix their shortcomings. Community members disagree of such characterizations of their neighborhood schools and continue to list the ways in which city and CPS officials have structured the opportunities of their children. The city remains a contested space.

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## Appendix A

### Comparison Chart: CPS Schools

#### 2009 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Three School Types

The following chart details the similarities and distinctions between the three school types:

	CHARTER	CONTRACT	PERFORMANCE
<b>Curriculum</b>	Must meet Illinois Learning Standards as specified in Charter School Agreement; may opt to participate in CPS initiatives	Must meet Illinois Learning Standards as specified in Performance Agreement; may opt to participate in CPS initiatives	Must meet Illinois Learning Standards as specified in Performance Plan; may opt to participate in CPS initiatives
<b>School Calendar and Schedule</b>	Must meet applicable Illinois State minimums	Must meet applicable Illinois State minimums	Must meet applicable Illinois State minimums and comply with approved CPS calendar options
<b>School Funding</b>	Per Pupil	Per Pupil	Per Pupil
<b>Illinois Teacher Certification</b>	In schools created prior to 2003, 75% of teachers must be certified; for schools created after 2003, 50% of teachers must be certified; all special needs teachers must be certified	100% of teachers must be certified	100% of teachers must be certified
<b>NCLB Compliance</b>	If Title I funding will be used, teachers in Title I schools are required to meet NCLB standards	All teachers are required to meet NCLB standards	All teachers are required to meet NCLB standards
<b>CPS Principal Eligibility Requirements</b>	No	No, but must have Type 75 (Illinois State Certification)	Yes, must be on CPS Principals list and have Type 75 (Illinois State Certification)
<b>Policies for Student Conduct</b>	Policies must comply with Illinois State Charter Schools Law and other applicable laws	Must follow CPS Student Code of Conduct	Must follow CPS Student Code of Conduct
<b>Chicago Teachers Union</b>	School is not subject to CTU collective bargaining agreement	School is not subject to CTU collective bargaining agreement	School must comply with the CTU collective bargaining agreement
<b>Teacher Pension Fund</b>	Certified teachers in pension fund; others covered by Social Security	All teachers covered by Social Security	All teachers participate in CPS pension fund
<b>Principals, Teachers and Staff Employed by:</b>	Charter School Board or sub-contracted management organization <sup>a</sup>	Contract School Board or sub-contracted management organization <sup>a</sup>	CPS
<b>Employee Compensation</b>	Determined by school operator	Determined by school operator	In accordance with CPS salary schedules
<b>Not-for-Profit Governance</b>	Governing Board	Governing Board	Not Applicable
<b>Parental/Community Involvement in School Oversight</b>	As defined by Illinois Charter Schools Law	School Advisory Body	Appointed or Traditional Local School Council (LSC)
<b>Filed Federal 501c3 Status</b>	Recommended	Recommended	Not Applicable
<b>Incorporated as a Not-for-Profit in Illinois</b>	Required	Required	Not Applicable

<sup>a</sup>CPS may detail certain staff for Charter and Contract Schools (i.e. security, custodial, etc.) in CPS facilities; these staff members are CPS employees. CPS calendar, lengths of school day and working conditions must be honored per CBAs. Schools must honor Department of Labor regulations regarding overtime and extended day or year pay for employees.

Figure A1. Chart describing the similarities and differences between charter schools, performance schools and contract schools in the city of Chicago. <http://www.ren2010.cps.k12.il.us/types.shtml>

## Appendix B

### Researcher Notification Form



## University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

### Department of Educational Policy Studies

1310 S Sixth Street, Champaign Illinois 61820

Phone: 217 244 0919 Fax: 217 244 7064

### Notification of Researcher Presence

**Title of Project:** Beyond The Failing School: Race, Space & Achievement in Chicago Public Schools

**Responsible Principal Investigator:** Dr. Laurence Parker

**Other Investigator(s):** Jasmine Johnson

This is a notice to inform you that Jasmine Johnson, a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is conducting research on the educational policy Renaissance 2010. In order to understand the response to the policy by community members, parents and teachers, the investigator is attending the public meetings organized by the Chicago Board of Education, Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE), Teachers for Social Justice, and the Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE).

The larger objective of this project is to explore the use of public schools in the re-creation of spaces of marginalization and isolation, by city officials and corporate leaders in their path toward ensuring that the city of Chicago becomes a global city. To undertake this goal, the subsidiary research questions are designed to assess the demographic characteristics of primarily Black neighborhoods in the city, to provide the proper context for understanding community responses to the geographic distribution of Chicago public schools (from 2004 to 2010). Thus, the primary question for this project is twofold. It first seeks to understand the school community's (parents, teachers, administrators, students) response to Renaissance 2010, in schools that are predominantly African American. It then seeks to understand the reasons for those responses. In the end, results from this research will help to challenge narratives which define disparities in achievement opportunities as academic achievement gaps, as well as those which assign blame to parents, students and communities using arguments based on cultural deficiency models.

There are no anticipated risks associated with this research project, other than those normally associated with daily life and the attendance of public meetings. Personal information will remain confidential, and nothing that you say will be attributed to you by name or any other identifiable information. **No personally identifiable information will be shared with others, and all personal information will remain confidential.** All data will be kept on a protected flash drive, which will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the home of the researcher for a

period of three years. Stored data contains no personal information of individual students, teachers, parents or community members.

Please contact Jasmine Johnson at 773-778-1303 or [jjohnso6@illinois.edu](mailto:jjohnso6@illinois.edu) or Dr. Laurence Parker at 217-244-9014 or [parker3@illinois.edu](mailto:parker3@illinois.edu) with any questions, or concerns about the research. You may also call Dr. Laurence Parker if you feel you have been injured or harmed by this research. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 or via email at [irb@uiuc.edu](mailto:irb@uiuc.edu).

Participation in this project is voluntary and the participant may discontinue at anytime without any penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled. Results from this research will be used to satisfy the requirements for the completion of the Educational Policy Studies doctoral program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The results from this research may also be used for the purposes of future research publications.

**If you prefer that your comments and or ideas not be used for the purposes of this research project, please verbally inform the site investigator, Jasmine Johnson.**

**If you consent to allowing your comments and or ideas to be used for the purposes of this research project, no further action is required.**

Please feel free to retain a copy of this research notification letter for your personal records.

Thank You,

Jasmine Johnson

## **Appendix C**

### **Community Organization Renaissance 2010 Position**

#### **TSJ Position on Renaissance 2010**

Teachers for Social Justice is a network of Chicago area teachers committed to critical, anti-racist, multicultural, participatory, democratic education. We believe that real school improvement requires the full participation of those with the most stake in high quality public education for all students –families, students, community members, and committed teachers and administrators. We oppose Chicago Public Schools’ Renaissance 2010 Plan for the following reasons:

1. Renaissance 2010 will give private organizations and “venders” the power to decide what will happen in public schools. Public institutions need democratically developed public solutions.
2. The plan is not designed to improve the education of children who presently live and have been living in the Mid-South and other low-income African American and Latino/a communities. If it were, then the resources targeted for 2010 would have been designated to improve schools in those areas long ago. In fact, these schools have been historically under funded and under resourced.
3. Renaissance 2010 blames low-income African American children and their families. It implies the only way to have good schools in these areas is to have mixed income schools. This assumes the children in the schools now are somehow the cause of education failure, and they can only do better when they are with middle class kids. Or, schools can only improve if they are moved out altogether. In fact, there are good schools that serve low-income children of color. The reality is that the cause of a failed education system is a history of racism, lack of equal opportunity to learn, deindustrialization, and disinvestment in communities of color by corporate interests and banks with the support of political leaders. If city officials, including the school board, cared about the children, they would do something about that.
4. Renaissance 2010 is not just a school plan. It is part of a much larger plan for gentrification and for moving out low-income African Americans and some Latino/as from prime real estate areas, in fact from the city altogether. These are the areas where the proposed school closings are concentrated. Gentrification is a central source of profit for developers, banks, and investors and a key element in making Chicago a global city of increasing inequality in housing, income, quality of life, and use of urban space.
5. Renaissance 2010 is a plan to introduce choice, privatization, and the marketplace into public education. Every parent becomes an individual consumer in the education market, rather than communities working together with educators to improve their schools. Research internationally shows that choice plans increase education inequality, leaving those with the least resources in the worst schools.

6. Renaissance 2010 is a plan that will disempower communities by eliminating Local School Councils and disempower teachers and other school workers by weakening their unions. Although school closings and privatization will affect specific neighborhoods now, they are just the tip of the iceberg for what will happen in other areas of the city. According to press reports, this is just the first stage of plan to overhaul the system as a whole.

7. Renaissance 2010 is a plan developed by powerful business and political interests. The plan the mayor announced in June was clearly spelled out by the Commercial Club of Chicago over one year ago in its report titled, *Left Behind*, dated June 2003. The Commercial Club is an organization of the most powerful corporate, financial, and political leaders in the city. That is why there has been no meaningful participation from the communities affected. This plan was devised a year ago by the CCC. Mayor Daley announced Renaissance 2010 at a Commercial Club of Chicago event. A plan to sell Renaissance 2010 to the public, the communities affected, teachers, and administrators was developed and rolled out by AT Kearney, a corporate consulting firm, that is providing “thought leadership” to CPS officials. The plan for “communicating” Renaissance 2010 and getting “buy in” was presented at a CPS planning meeting on May 6, 2004, before any public hearings to supposedly get community input.

So the question is: Who will decide what kind of education our children should have, the Commercial Club of Chicago, mayor Daley, and the big real estate developers? Or parents, communities and teachers?

There is an alternative beyond failing schools and business-led education. There are examples of city schools that are grounded in children’s lives, cultures, and identities, that are anti-racist and pro-justice, that have a rigorous curriculum and are hopeful, joyful, and visionary, and that teach children to think critically about the world we live in so they can actively participate in making it more just. That Renaissance is possible. TSJ is working with community members, families, students, unions, and progressive school reform organizations to oppose Renaissance 2010 and develop these real alternatives.

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